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Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Lord of creation, You have written Your signature in the bursting beauty of this magnificent spring day in our Nation's Capital. We thank You for the rebirth of hope that comes with this season of renewal. You remind us: Behold, I make all things new. As the seeds and bulbs have germinated in the earth, so You have prepared us to burst forth in newness of life. We forget the former things and claim Your new beginning for us. Help us to accept Your forgiveness and become giving and forgiving people. Clean out the hurting memories of our hearts so we may be open communicators of Your vibrant, creative spirit as we tackle problems and grasp possibilities of this day for the sake of our beloved Nation's future. By Your power. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable THAD COCHRAN, a Senator from the State of Mississippi, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader, I am pleased to announce that today the Senate will be in a period of morning business throughout the day with time reserved for Senators DURBIN, THOMAS, CRAIG, MURKOWSKI, and BROWNBACK. Cloture was filed on the gas tax bill on Friday. Therefore, pursuant to rule XXII, all first-degree amendments must be filed by 1 p.m. today. By previous consent, the cloture vote has been scheduled to occur at 2:25 p.m. on Tuesday. That vote will be the first vote of this week. The Senate will also consider the marriage tax penalty bill during this week's session and the budget conference report. Therefore, Senators can expect votes to occur on Friday.

I thank my colleagues for their attention and cooperation.

GAS TAX CONSIDERATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we were able to work our way through the budget this past week. It took a lot of time and cooperation, but I think we were able to make a lot of headway. We are disappointed that a number of our amendments were not adopted.

The good news—and I think we should focus on this a little bit this morning—is the fact that gas prices are actually declining, on an average of almost 3 cents a gallon this past week. There is a long way to go to decline to where they first started picking up, but progress has been made.

With the vote on the gas tax bill coming up this week, I think we should recognize that the crisis we did see is certainly being diminished, if not alleviated. No one is happy about the cost of a gallon of gasoline. I stopped over the weekend with my daughter, and she filled up their vehicle's gas tank and commented about the price of gasoline. That is the way it is. Gas is too high. However, what we are attempting to do this week is something we should reexamine. We should recognize that if this bill is passed by the Senate, it will either be held at the desk indefinitely or would be what we call blue slipped, if it is sent to the House of Representatives.

We should focus on things other than this legislation. For example, if the majority is serious about this matter, we could call up H.R. 3081, the House-passed tax bill which concerns the minimum wage. That is on the Senate Calendar. We could work on that. That would allow other amendments to be offered that are meaningful.

There isn't anyone in this body who does not want to see a decrease in the cost of fuel prices. Simply stated, this is not the way to go about it. OPEC has signaled its willingness to produce more oil. Non-OPEC nations have agreed to contribute some 700,000 barrels a day to alleviate this crisis.

We would be better off focusing on doing things so we are not as dependent on foreign oil. We have to import 55 percent of the oil we consume in this country. For example, we need to do something to make sure that the oil that is produced in Alaska is used in the United States and not shipped to Asia. We have to do something to make sure we develop a long-term energy policy and do something with alternative fuels. Solar, wind, and geothermal are areas we need to explore. We have spent very small amounts of money each year on hydrogen fuel development; this, some day, will overtake the fossil fuels that we use.

There are a lot of things we need to do. One of the things we need not do is try to explain to the American public that we are doing something by reducing the 4.3-cent-a-gallon tax for part of this year. No. 1, in a number of States, if the Federal tax is knocked off, the States are obligated by law to pick up that extra 4.3 cents, or whatever it is, that the Federal Government knocks off.

In short, I think we could be using this time in a much more productive fashion than debating the 4.3-cent-per gallon tax reduction which is cosmetic in nature only and is certainly not even a short-term fix.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the time until 1 p.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his designee.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA HOCKEY TEAM FOR THEIR NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I came to the floor today as we begin business this week to talk about two issues. First, let me describe what happened Saturday evening on the east coast. There was a hockey team from the University of North Dakota that went to the east coast to play in the NCAA Division I hockey championship. When they finished that competition, the North Dakota Sioux were Division I national champions once again. In fact, it is the seventh Division I national championship for the University of North Dakota hockey team.

I am an alumnus of that great school, and it was with great pride I watched the game on television last Saturday evening and saw the North Dakota Fighting Sioux win that contest. We are the home of great skaters, great hockey players, and great tradition. This year, once again, we demonstrated that you don't have to have a 40,000-student population to be a Division I national champion.

I called the White House this morning and asked if they would invite that team to the White House, as is often the custom for championship teams—college football, basketball, and other teams, including professional teams who have been invited to the White House by the President to say congratulations to them. I hope he will do the same for this wonderful group of young men from North Dakota who are now this Nation's champions in Division I hockey.

So my hat is off to the University of North Dakota. It is a wonderful school. I am proud to have gotten my undergraduate degree there. I am increasingly proud year after year as I watch that school. Not only are they great athletes and hockey players, these are also great students and good young men. This is an athletic program without parallel around the country, in my judgment. Again, I congratulate those young men. I am very proud of them.

THE SENATE AGENDA

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I will discuss for a moment the issues that face the Congress, where we are and why we are here, and suggest perhaps a slightly more robust agenda for the next couple of months.

It is now a Monday in April, and it is not quite clear to me what the agenda will be on the floor of the Senate this week. I guess it is not quite clear yet to anyone. We know that in the coming weeks we will do our work as appropriators. I am on the Appropriations Committee, and we will do our work as appropriators and bring appropriations bills to the floor of the Senate, and there are some authorization bills that must get done. But beyond that, it is not quite clear what the agenda is.

Recognizing that my political party, the one I represent in this Chamber, did not win the election, it is also clear we don't set the agenda in the Senate. The political system has a unique way of describing who controls institutions such as this. And those who have the most members, who get the most votes in a general election, have the opportunity to control and create an agenda. That is as it should be. But it is perhaps frustrating for me and others that our agenda is not nearly as robust as it could or should be.

Let me describe some of the things I think we ought to be doing and that I hope the majority leader and others will agree at some point in the coming weeks that we will do.

First, we passed some long time ago a Patients' Bill of Rights. I didn't support the Senate version of it because I didn't think it was a good bill. But the House of Representatives passed a bipartisan piece of legislation coauthored by a Democrat and a Republican in the House of Representatives. It was a very vigorous battle in the House. They passed a real Patients' Bill of Rights bill.

It says in this contest of wills between patients, doctors, the insurance companies, and HMOs, that there are certain rights that patients ought to have.

Every patient in this country who seeks medical treatment ought to have the right to understand all of their options for medical treatment—not just what's the least expensive.

Those who need emergency room treatment ought to be able to expect to have emergency room treatment when needed.

When a woman falls off a 40-foot cliff and is hauled into an emergency room comatose, and then the HMO later says: We will not approve your emergency room cost because you didn't get preapproval for emergency room treatment—there is something wrong with the system.

Are there certain rights that patients ought to have in this health care system? The answer yes. Among those are the rights embodied in the bill in the House of Representatives called the Patients' Bill of Rights. It is now in conference. It is not likely to produce 67 votes, unfortunately, under current circumstances because the House-appointed conferees, who in most cases didn't vote for the bill, sent it to conference.

The Senate, of course, has a piece of legislation that does not do the job. But those of us who support a strong Patients' Bill of Rights remain hopeful that between now and the end of this legislative session we will pass a bipartisan piece of legislation called a Patients' Bill of Rights that really provides the rights and the assistance to patients in dealing with their insurance companies with respect to their health care treatment.

Juvenile justice: We passed a juvenile justice bill in the Senate. That bill was passed in Senate legislation that many do not like.

Among the two pieces of legislation that people do not like on that bill—and the reason I guess it is stalled—is some legislation dealing with guns. We provided two simple components to that piece of legislation.

I come from North Dakota. I grew up hunting. I had a gun when I was a teenager. I pheasant hunted, I deer hunted, and practiced target shooting. I know about guns. I am not somebody running into this Chamber saying let's have gun control. That is not my orientation at all.

But the two pieces dealing with guns that we added to the Juvenile Justice Act are so sensible. One is mandatory trigger locks for handguns. When 6-year-olds go to school and shoot another 6-year-old, ought we not to understand the need for trigger locks on handguns? It seems to me that is eminently sensible.

Second, the issue of gun shows, and the question of whether at gun shows that people set up around this country on Saturdays or Sundays there ought to be an instant check when guns are sold to find out whether you are selling a gun to a convicted felon.

Go to a gun store anywhere in this country and try to buy a gun. They are going to run your name through an instant check to find out if you are a convicted felon because if you are, you cannot buy a gun. But we have a loophole at gun shows which are big, and getting bigger. There are more of them. Many feel—including the Senate, incidentally, by a rather close vote—that we ought to have the opportunity to close that loophole and say if you are going to buy a gun, it does not matter whether it is in a gun store or at a gun show, you ought to have to have your name run through an instant check so we can make sure we are not selling a gun to a felon.

Those two issues—trigger locks for handguns for the safety of children in this country, and closing the gun show loophole—have meant that the juvenile justice bill, which is so important, is now in conference, and apparently we can't get it out. I hope we can be more sensible about this and get that bill out of conference, bring it to the floor of the Senate and the House, and get it to the President for his signature.

There are other items we continue to struggle with, such as the issue of school construction.

I have spoken at great length about walking into the Cannon Ball School and seeing little Rosie Two Bears, a third grader, who says: Mr. Senator, are you going to build me a new school?

I said: No, I don't have the money to build you a new school, Rosie.

This is a school with 150 kids, one water fountain, two toilets, and closings of the school building which is not fit for classes, where sewer gas comes up and they have to evacuate the rooms. Rosie isn't getting the kind of education we want for her as an American.

When we say let's help rebuild, renovate, and construct some of America's schools to bring them back up to standard, we are told, no. You can't do that. That is not the Federal Government's job.

It is interesting. There was a piece in Newsweek by Jonathan Alter, a rather interesting columnist. He said about 4 or 5 years ago the Congress decided they were going to spend $8 billion to upgrade jails and prisons. The State and local governments absolutely spent the money for jails and prisons. The Federal Government can upgrade the jails and prisons but not the schools. Is it less important to bring schools up to standard than a jail or a prison somewhere?

If we can spend $8 billion to improve places to incarcerate criminals, we ought to be able to spend a few billion dollars to help kids go into a classroom door in a school that we as parents could be proud of. That ought to be done in this session of the Congress as well.

Judicial nominations, we want to get through. We don't have a committee in this Congress for lost and found. Almost everywhere else—hotels, airports, every other institution—when you lose something and ask where the lost and found is, they send you there. There is a lost and found over there. In Congress there is no place you can go to the lost and found. Maybe we need a committee on the lost and found. When these policy issues leave here, you never hear from them again.

I hope that in the coming days Republicans and Democrats together can decide that there are certain common elements to an agenda that will strengthen this country and make this a better place in which to live. I don't believe that we have a circumstance where one side of the political aisle is all right, and the other side all wrong. That is not the case. We have good men and women serving in this Chamber on both sides of the political aisle. But it remains a frustration that in some areas where we have passed legislation, it gets sent to a conference somewhere never to be seen again because a small minority refuses to accept sensible judgments of the majority in both the House and the Senate.

I think that is the case with the Patients' Bill of Rights with respect to the vote in the House, and certainly is the case with juvenile justice and decisions in the Senate on things such as trigger locks and also closing the gun show loophole.

I hope we can find a way to address some of these important issues in the coming weeks and months.

I hope we can demonstrate to the American people that we care about education and health care, address the crime issue in a thoughtful way, get nominations through this Chamber, and appoint Federal judges to fill vacancies, which are things that represent part of the agenda that needs to be completed as soon as possible in the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, are we in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct. Under the previous order, the leadership time has been reserved.

SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I will talk a few minutes about the schedule for the week and then comment specifically on some of the issues we will be addressing during the schedule for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

We have several important issues before the Senate to take up and hopefully complete action on. One of them is the question of our national energy policy. That will be brought to the Senate during the day on Tuesday with a vote on the gas tax issue.

Following that, we will be discussing the marriage penalty tax. This past Saturday, I had occasion to be in a store and one of the other customers asked me: Are we finally going to get rid of the unfair marriage penalty tax? I said we would try to and hoped to do it this week.

I went on about my business and the customer went on about his. The customer came back later and said: Do you think you actually will begin to eliminate the very unfair tax? I said: That is what we are trying to do.

Then he came back a third time and said: You are going to have a vote next week? I said: Yes, we are. He asked if he could get the names of those voting against getting rid of the unfair tax. I said: Yes, it will be in the RECORD. Call my office; we will be glad to get it to you.

That is what we hear in the real world, off of Capitol Hill. People say this is a real problem.

We have been talking about eliminating the marriage penalty tax for years. It is time we get it done. We will have that debate on Wednesday and, I presume, a vote Wednesday or Thursday to see exactly where the Senate is: Do we want to eliminate the marriage penalty tax or not? I think we should. I certainly will vote that way.

Before the week is out, we hope to take up a number of Executive Calendar nominations. We have a number of nominations that we should be able to clear. We will work with interested Senators and committees involved on both sides of the aisle to see if we can clear a number of these nominations.

Last and certainly not least is the fact we will also want to complete action on the conference on the budget. We completed action on the budget resolution of the Senate on Friday. I understand the conferees will be working together during the next 2 days, hopefully, to file the necessary report by Tuesday night. Then we will have the necessary debate, whatever time that might be. It could be up to as much as 10 hours. Then we will have a vote on that conference report Thursday evening or Friday morning.

That leads me to another point I want to be sure to make early in the week. As I have notified Senators in the past, during these weeks right before a recess—in this case the Easter recess—we will go home and be with our constituents and families. Senators should anticipate the possibility or even the likelihood of votes on Friday. If we can complete the work I have outlined by Thursday night then we will not be in session on Friday. But if for some reason we have not been able to complete at least the vote on the conference report on the budget, then we will be in session on Friday. We certainly hope to finish it by noon on Friday, but that will depend on how much time is needed and when the Senate wishes to get to a final vote.

I wanted to go over the schedule for the week so Senators know what to anticipate on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and the possibility even of Friday votes on the budget resolution conference report.

Now let me go back and talk about some of these issues, to try to make clear what I am trying to do by moving these bills, and explain what the situation is with regard to the gas tax, for instance.

There have been those who said the Senate voted last week during the debate on the budget resolution on a sense of the Senate that basically the Senate would not temporarily suspend or in any way remove the gas tax.

The Federal gasoline tax is 4.3 cents a gallon. That was added back in 1993. But the total amount of the Federal tax is 18.4 cents a gallon. I remind my colleagues, that does not count the State taxes and in many cases local taxes on gasoline. Where I am from, we even have, in addition to the State and Federal taxes, what is known as the seawall tax.

That is quite curious because quite often we do not see anything happening on the seawall, but the tax is being collected and spent on general improvement of roads. Most people do not gripe because we have a developing area and we want to have good roads. I think that is a very important thing.

But, as a matter of fact, the total tax on gasoline in most States is as much as a quarter or a third or more of the total cost of a gallon of gasoline. So the taxes on gasoline are significant.

With regard to this vote last week, the so-called Byrd sense-of-the-Senate resolution said it is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals in this budget resolution do not assume the reduction of any Federal gasoline taxes on either a temporary or permanent basis. What we will be considering today and tomorrow morning in our gas tax bill is specifically designed to make certain that highway spending, and thus the functional totals, are not changed by our gas tax suspension.

Therefore, the spending assumptions in the budget resolution do not assume the reduction of any Federal gas taxes on either a temporary or permanent basis. The revenue levels in the budget resolution, however, do assume a temporary suspension of the 4.3-cent-a-gallon so-called Gore tax increase.

If the Byrd amendment had been drafted to read, ‘‘it is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals and the revenue levels in this budget resolution do not assume . . .’’ then it would have had a very different impact. So I am trying to clarify the difference in what some people thought the resolution did last week and what we are actually doing.

Under the budget resolution, there is no question we could have this debate and have this vote on gas tax because this is what it would do. It says we would temporarily suspend, just for the remainder of this year, 4.3 cents a gallon—I will come back to that in a moment—and, if gasoline prices go to $2 a gallon national average, then the entire 18.4 cents a gallon would be suspended in a gas tax holiday just to the end of the year.

So when people say, How much would this cost? The first answer is it would depend on whether or not gasoline reached the national average of $2 a gallon and when that would occur, when that would take effect.

The amendment language is drafted so this will not affect the highway trust fund. I want to emphasize that: It will not reduce the funds in the highway trust fund. It would hold harmless the highway trust fund. If there is this gas tax holiday, it would come out of the surplus.

I remind my colleagues, we do at this point have a $23 billion on-budget surplus now; that is, surplus in addition to what we have as a result of the FICA, Social Security tax. So there is a surplus there. While we would like to protect that surplus as much as possible and not use it, or see it used to pay down the national debt, this is what I think to be a reasonable way to use some of it, if gasoline prices should actually go up to $2 a gallon.

What I am saying is, there is no difference between what we are trying to do and what the Byrd sense-of-the-Senate resolution said. He was trying, I believe, to make sure it did not come out of the highway trust fund. As a matter of fact, this amendment is drafted in such a way it does not.

Let me remind my colleagues how we got to this additional 4.3-cent-a-gallon gas tax. It was added in 1993. In the Senate, it passed on a tie vote with the Vice President, Vice President GORE, breaking that tie. There was a big debate about whether or not we should be increasing the price of gasoline by raising this tax in the first place.

But there was an even more important, very telling point, and that was, in this case the gas tax would not go into the highway trust fund but it was going to go into the General Treasury to be used for any number of purposes by the Federal Government, not to build highways and bridges and to improve urban mass transportation and rail service or anything of that nature, just to go into the big, deep, dark hole of the Federal Treasury.

By the way, I think about $21 billion of gas tax revenue went into the General Treasury. But then in 1997 Congress changed that and said no, this is a gasoline tax and it should go, like other gasoline taxes, into the highway trust fund. So it started going into the highway trust fund.

With regard to what we are trying to do here, the elite Washington position is: Oh, what difference does 4.3 cents a gallon make? We can afford that.

Yes, maybe, if you live and work on Capitol Hill or for the Federal Government. But if you are out there in the real world, and you are a working family, and you are driving 100 miles a day round trip to get to an industrial job, or to get to where your employment is, while it still will not add up to a lot of money, when you are a blue-collar worker, when you are a union worker, working at a shipyard or International Paper mill, a few dollars more a week in the price of gasoline does make a difference. It comes right out of that family budget.

So it is typically what you get here in Washington, the elite attitude: Well, it will not make that much difference. But it is not only the individual who is paying those higher gas taxes, it also affects smaller business men and women. It affects barge operators on our rivers and inland lakes across America. It affects the truck driver who, by the way, if he is an independent driver—he owns his own rig, he drives not a few hundred miles a week, he drives many hundreds of miles a week up and down this country and back and forth across this country—it is hitting him or her very hard because he is paying this extra cost to run those trucks.

Or, if you are in a business that involves a lot of trucks, a lot of heavy equipment, such as road construction or sand and gravel work, you have seen the cost of doing business go up considerably. It is not a few dollars, it is not hundreds of dollars, it is thousands of dollars in cases such as that.

By the way, that comes right out of the bottom line because quite often you are carrying out a contract for which you have already submitted a bid, you have a price agreement, and now you see you are having to take this extra cost right out of getting this job done. So it is having a real impact.

The next argument against reducing the gasoline tax, or having a gas tax holiday, is that: Look, this is temporary. It was just a spike up in the price of gasoline. We did not see it coming. We were caught napping—according to the Secretary of Energy, Secretary Richardson—and the OPEC countries will open the spigot up a little bit and everything will be fine, prices will go back down.

Maybe they will. They have ticked down some in some areas, although I bought gasoline on Saturday and it cost $1.63 a gallon, and that was not the premium; premium was more than that. In some places it is more than that, in some places it is probably less than that. So maybe it will come down and maybe it will stay down, but I think maybe it might, as a matter of fact, tick back up because world demand is going to exceed supply. We are going to be drawing down reserves around the world. So I am concerned it could go back up, in addition to the fact it is still very high.

So this is an issue we should think about. We should be careful how we proceed. But we should have this debate. It is bigger than just gasoline price and the Federal gas tax, although, I repeat, to a lot of working people it has had an impact and it will continue to do so.

There is a broader question involved, and that is: What is our national energy plan? What are we going to do about the price of fuel, alternative fuels, conservation, environmental impact? All these questions are looming.

I do not think we have a true national energy plan for the future. Our dependence on foreign oil has gone from 45 percent of our needs 10 years ago to around 55 or 56 percent now. I think it is going to go over 60.

What are we going to do? Are we comfortable with that? Are the American people comfortable with that? I do not think so.

In the early seventies, we had the higher prices. We had the gas lines. Nobody liked it. People really got mad. We put forth a lot of effort in Congress to develop a national energy plan and to make ourselves less dependent on oil. It has not worked. It has gone the other way.

We need to ask ourselves what we are going to do about this. What if the OPEC countries and other countries from whom we get our oil decide to cut the spigot down or cut it off? Economically, we would be in a real mess quickly.

We have the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which is something we did in the aftermath of the last price increase and the long lines. We have SPR filled up so if we have a national emergency, we can use it for about a month.

Is that enough? Should we do more? What are we going to do in the broader sense? I view this current upward spike as another knock on the door, another tap on the shoulder: Hey, America, you have a problem. You are dependent on Libya and Qadhafi; you are dependent on Iraq for about 700,000 barrels of oil a day. Are you comfortable with that?

When I go home, I have people come up to me and say: Aren't these the same people we went to war for a few years ago? And now they are turning the spigot on and off, and the prices go way low or high. Is this what we want? I do not think so. It is very dangerous.

Then one may ask: What is going to be done? What can be done? We do need to look for more oil reserves of our own. We need to give incentives for our men and women, our independents, our wildcats, the small operators, and the big ones, to find more reserves, to make use of these oil wells that are capped right now. There are a few in my own State and certainly other places around the country. We ought to see if there are other places we can open up.

The Senate voted last week against an amendment that would have prevented using the reserves in ANWR in Alaska. I believe we can get at those oil reserves without causing environmental damage, and we should do that.

It is not just about more oil. The President said we should look at alternatives. I agree. What are the alternatives about which we are talking? One is natural gas. When I sit on my front porch in my hometown of Pascagoula, MS, looking off to the south and the east, I see a natural gas well. I believe natural gas is a good alternative. It is clean, and we can make a lot more use of it if we provide some incentives for making greater use of natural gas. We have tremendous reserves of natural gas. So much of it is in the ground; so much has been capped because it has not been worthwhile to get it out. That is an alternative that is environmentally safe, and we have lots of it. That is one option.

Also, in my part of the country we use coal to provide electricity to our people. It is cheap, and it also is clean-burning coal. Our companies have taken actions to deal with the emissions problems. Yet EPA today is putting genuine hard pressure on five companies in America, including Southern Company in our part of the United States, that will drive up the cost and will cause real problems using coal as their fuel supply in the future.

That is one alternative we ought to keep. We ought to find more oil; we ought to make use of natural gas; we ought to continue to find ways to burn coal with clean technology, with modern technology, but also that it is clean coal being burned.

The next thing is nuclear power. Nuclear power is clean. There is nuclear power already in Europe, China, and Japan. Yet we have been trying for years and have spent billions of dollars finding a repository for nuclear waste. The Senate passed a bill, I believe, two or three times, and the President is threatening to veto a very carefully thought out procedure of a repository for nuclear waste.

Sooner or later, if we cannot deal with that problem, our nuclear plants will be faced with the threat of shutting down. If we do not explore for more oil, if we do not make greater use of natural gas, if we put limits and make it difficult to use coal, if, as a matter of fact, we cannot use nuclear power because we cannot come up with a proper way with which to deal with nuclear waste disposal—talk about an environmental problem. Deciding how to deal with nuclear waste is the biggest environmental problem in America today. We have been batting that ball back and forth for 10 years or more, and we still have not resolved it.

If not oil, not natural gas, not coal, and not nuclear, what? Solar and wind? That will help some, but the statistics I have seen show that will provide a very small percentage of our needs. Ethanol—I have supported ethanol. I just do not believe wind and solar, ethanol, and alternative sources beyond the ones I have been talking about will solve this problem.

I hope, as a result of the debate today and tomorrow, we will admit that we do not have a national energy policy, that we are dependent on foreign oil and are going to be for the foreseeable future unless we sit down, think this through, and come up with some ideas on how to proceed.

I have urged the committees of jurisdiction—the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, and other committees—to have joint hearings or have hearings and ask questions about these long-term problems of how we are going to deal with these issues. I hope after we have this debate and votes tomorrow, we will have a broader, general energy package that will begin to address these long-term problems. I am concerned about it. I hope the Senate will step up to this issue and make a difference beyond what we have done in the past.

The second issue on which the Senate will be working this week is the marriage penalty tax. I believe most Americans have some idea by now of what it is. There have been different proposals on how to deal with it. Some of the arguments are: Yes, but if you are married, you get certain bonuses. I do not think that applies to what we are trying to deal with here.

The fact of the matter is, if you are a young couple or, as we realized last week, an older couple—couples married 25 years get hit with a marriage penalty tax, but for young couples it is particularly startling.

I found that to be the case with my own family. Our daughter got married last May. She has been hearing talk about the marriage penalty tax, so she decided to find out what that would mean for her. She and her husband both work. Together, they have a pretty good income, although they are certainly not wealthy, but they are in that middle bracket. She figured it would cost them about $500 more this year in taxes because they got married.

By the way, it is going to escalate over the next few years to about $1,400 a year. This is just basically wrong. We should encourage people to get married. We should not in any way discourage them by saying: Oh, by the way, if you do get married, you will pay more in taxes.

Some people will complain the package that came out of the Finance Committee is too big; that, as a matter of fact, not only did we deal with the low-income people by increasing what was in the House bill for the so-called earned-income tax credit, EITC, we also said we will double the 15-percent bracket and the 28-percent bracket because we do think if a marriage penalty tax is wrong, it should be wrong for everybody. It should not be wrong just for the entry-level, lower income people; it ought to be also unfair for the upper lower income bracket and the middle-income bracket; as a matter of fact, right across the board.

But we at least broadened its application to the middle bracket to make sure, if you have a young couple who are both working—whether they are in blue-color jobs or whether they are in entry-level professional jobs—they should have this penalty eliminated.

Senator MOYNIHAN of New York, and others, have an alternative proposal. I think it is worth considering. In fact, if we could afford it, I would like to have what we are doing and what Senator MOYNIHAN is proposing in terms of—I guess it is the income splitting option. But I think we ought to have that offered and debated.

I think we can come up with a way that we can have a full debate where there could be amendments with regard to the marriage penalty legislation. I hope we can reach an agreement on how that would come up. Then on Wednesday and Thursday, we would debate the alternatives and we would have a vote. But it is long overdue.

I hope we can do as we did on the Social Security earnings limitation. We passed it unanimously in the Senate. A lot of people said: Oh, gee, that was so easy. Why didn't you do it before? We have been talking about it for 20 years. We couldn't get it done.

They said it cost too much or that senior citizens didn't really need it or it was a part of a package. But for some reason or another—for years and years—it did not happen. Finally, we isolated it, passed it clean, and passed it overwhelmingly.

The President had a big signing ceremony last week saying: Finally, we have eliminated the Social Security earnings test. Good. The main thing is our seniors who are between 65 and 69, who want to continue working without being penalized in their Social Security benefits, are going to have that opportunity.

But I think the same is true here. It is clear now we have isolated it. The marriage penalty tax is not connected to incentives for people to adopt children. It is not connected to the death tax or the estate tax. It is not connected to anything else. We are just going to have a debate about the marriage penalty tax. Senator HUTCHISON of Texas and Senator ASHCROFT of Missouri, and a number of other Senators on both sides, are going to say: We ought to do this. This is the way to do it.

But in the end, this is the point: We are going to see this week if the Senate is for eliminating the marriage penalty tax or not.

The guy in the store where I was shopping is going to have a list of the names of those who vote against it. I hope the Senate will step up to this and that we will begin the process of totally eliminating the marriage penalty tax.

Then, finally, on the budget resolution, I hope we can get a final agreement on the conference report and that we will pass it before the end of the week so we can go forward with our appropriations bills. That is a very important part of what we need to do this year; that is, pass the 13 appropriations bills for Agriculture, for defense, for the Interior, and for all the various Agencies and Departments of the Government, and more importantly for the American people.

We ought to do it earlier than usual. There is no reason why we should wait until June or July to do the appropriations bills. Let's get started in May. Let's move them earlier. That is where we can include things that we think should be done.

For instance, on the foreign relations bill, I think we should provide aid for Colombia to fight the narcoguerrillas and try to get control of that drug war there. I think we ought to do it, and do it on the foreign relations bill.

With regard to Kosovo and defense, the first bill that comes along, whether it is MilCon—military construction—or the defense bill, I hope we will add that additional funding. This budget resolution conference report will get all of that started.

Then I think important, once again, is, we should give credit to the Budget Committee and to what we are doing in the Congress as a result of this budget resolution. No. 1, for the third year in a row, we have the ability to have a balanced budget—3 years running now. Before that, we had not had one since 1969. Yet this year we have the ability to do that for a third time, and to protect every cent of the Social Security trust fund income. Every cent that comes in from FICA taxes will be preserved and set aside and will not be spent on other Federal Government spending programs.

I do not know exactly what that amount would be for the coming year, but it would be significant. I think maybe the figure is approximately $160 billion, or something close to that. But over a 10-year period, it will be $1 trillion. By not spending it, that is good for the program, it is good for technology, and we can pay down the national debt.

Over a 3-year period now, I understand we may have reduced the national debt by somewhere more than $300 billion. A lot of people never thought they would see the day come when we would actually begin to pay down the national debt.

If we stay on the path we are on, if we stay on the trajectory we now see with technology—and a lot has to happen; we have to have good fiscal responsibility, monetary policy, stable energy prices, right across the board—but if those things will stay within the ranges we are looking for, we could reduce completely the national debt by the year 2013 or 2015. That has not been done since Andrew Jackson was President of the United States. That is really an amazing thing.

If we can continue to keep in place policies by congressional actions, and by monetary policy, and by the administration, and see economic growth year after year of around 4.5 percent—and in recent years it has been more than that; but just 4.5 percent—it would have a tremendous impact on the economy and the explosion of revenue coming into the Social Security trust fund.

When we come to the point, over the next 2 or 3 years, where we are going to have fundamental reform of Social Security, to make sure it is preserved, protected, and, as a matter of fact, it is there for our children and our grandchildren in a way that will be meaningful to them, just that growth in the economy of 4.5 percent will give us the options we need to have a very strong program that will go not just into the year 2040 but go throughout this century.

I think these are very important issues. This is going to be an interesting week to have debate. When we complete that budget resolution, it will be a very positive action and will set the course for not only this year but well into the rest of this decade.

Mr. President, I have been looking forward to this opportunity to have this debate and have these votes this week. I look forward to that process as we go forward.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to restore the remaining, I believe, 15 minutes of the hour that was reserved on the Democratic side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

GAS PRICES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President I enjoyed listening to the majority leader. I have always worked well with him, although we have different perspectives and a different philosophy and opinion on some issues. I have worked with him both in the House of Representatives and here in the Senate. When I listen to him I am always reminded why I have always liked him personally. He is a good person. I appreciate his public service.

There are some things on the agenda, however, that we might not agree about. I want to comment about a couple of those issues, especially with respect to an agenda item this week dealing with the repeal of the 4.3-cent-a-gallon gas tax, which is set for a cloture vote tomorrow afternoon here in the Senate Chamber.

My expectation is that the cloture vote will fail. I am not certain of that, but that is my expectation. Just hearing some of the comments and some of the statements that have been made previously, I expect that cloture vote will fail, and I think justifiably so.

Let me describe why.

I think the price of fuel in this country is a pretty tough pill for the American people to swallow. What has happened is the price of gasoline has spiked up. It is not because the free market has caused that. It is because we have a cartel called the OPEC countries that are limiting production and increasing the international price for their product.

That is not the free market. That is monopoly pricing. They have the strength and, I guess, the opportunity to do that. What they have done is, of course, impose a significant new charge on American families, on family farmers, producers, manufacturers, drivers, and others.

There was no vote on that. That was something the OPEC countries did. We didn't have a chance to discuss that or vote on it in the Congress.

The question I ask with respect to the repeal of the 4.3-cent gas tax—which is, after all, rather small in the scheme of what has happened to the price of gasoline—is who would get the benefit of that? Is there a guarantee of any kind that the American people would actually get the benefit of the gas tax reduction? The gasoline tax is not imposed at the pump. The gasoline tax is imposed up the line. There is no guarantee at all that if the Congress would repeal the 4.3-cent gasoline tax, that that savings wouldn't simply be blended into the profits of the large oil companies. There is no guarantee that the American driver is going to pull up to a gas pump and find that gasoline prices are 4.3 cents a gallon less.

The other question is, What is going to happen to make sure we continue the building of the transportation infrastructure, roads and bridges, the programs we have already approved in the highway program that are done with this money? I am told by some: This money will be made up from the general fund. Where from the general fund? Where do we get that money? How do we know that will be the case?

Someone once said you should never buy anything from somebody who is out of breath. There is a kind of breathless quality about bringing this bill to the floor of the Senate to repeal the 4.3-cent-a-gallon gas tax.

One of the reasons we heard Members stand up last week and ask some very tough questions about this is, most of them understand, this is kind of an immediate, quick reaction that hasn't been thought through very well. It will not necessarily provide any relief to drivers. There is no guarantee this 4.3-cent-a-gallon reduction is going to show up at the pumps.

Secondly, where is the money? Where are we going to make up the money? Which roads aren't we going to fix or which bridges are not going to be repaired? Those are questions that need answering this week. Because they cannot be answered, I think the cloture vote will fail.

I think this is a pretty good discussion we are having with respect to energy policy. The majority leader indicated this country doesn't have much of an energy policy. I don't quarrel with that. We haven't had much under any administration, as a matter of fact. We are far too dependent on foreign sources of energy. There is no question about that. But in many ways this is a helpful discussion because we have had the discussion in recent years about the globalization of our economy. How can one stand in the way of the global economy? We are told this economy is a global economy. Understand it, they say.

Well, where are people going to produce energy in this world? In a global economy, they will produce energy where it is least expensive to produce. You can bring up oil under the sands in the Persian Gulf for a fraction of the cost of bringing up oil in the United States. That is the global economy, I guess. That is a decision the global economy helps make.

The majority leader asked the question—I think a very important question—do we have a national policy with respect to energy and our desire to be somewhat independent of foreign sources? That is a good question not just for oil. It is a good question for steel and for a whole series of things we know are important to the American economy.

We have been told until this time there is nothing that is more important than globalization of our economy; if steel moves and is produced elsewhere, so be it. Do the people who say that feel the same way about oil? Because that is where we are. The oil we consume is produced elsewhere. We now discover that when a cartel manipulates artificially the price of oil by restricting supply, Americans get overcharged. That is part of a monopoly in the global economy that we do not control.

We need to do a lot of things. This administration is proposing something I hope the majority leader and others will support in the area of domestic renewable energy. They are proposing significant new initiatives in wind energy, which I think make a lot of sense. We have new technology on wind-generation devices that is remarkable. If we put some in this Chamber on the right days, we could electrify New York.

In my State, North Dakota, I grew up walking outdoors in the morning with the wind and the breeze. If you take a map and evaluate what is the Saudi Arabia of wind energy, it is North Dakota, and a lot of other northern border States are right behind. Some will say, listening to me speak, they would have known we ranked high on wind energy. But seriously, we have an opportunity, with new technology, to capture wind energy in many parts of this country and extend our energy supply.

The same is true with biomass. The same is true with geothermal, and natural gas, which the majority leader suggested. Absolutely, we have wonderful new discoveries in natural gas and deep well finds. We are doing a lot of that.

We do need to pay attention to the development of oil and the development of coal, which are important in this country. We also need to get behind the proposals coming from the Department of Energy and this President's budget that call for the development of renewable energy resources and what is called green power—environmentally friendly sources of power. I mentioned one: wind energy. We need to fully fund these initiatives.

I hope no one comes to the floor later and says, ''We really care about our energy supply,'' if before that time they voted against these initiatives to extend our energy supply by investing in renewable energy sources. We need to do that.

This, in many ways, is a wonderful discussion. What does the global economy mean? Does it mean we don't have to worry about dependence on anything? We are now discovering it means we have to worry about dependence with respect to oil. What about steel? What about a range of other economic activities without which a country such as ours will not long remain a world economic power? This is a great discussion to have. It is right on point and right on time.

Yes, it is about oil and gas, but it is about much more than that. When we have this vote on cloture on the 4.3-cent gasoline tax repeal, I hope it will be preceded by a rather lengthy discussion of a whole range of these issues. I appreciate the majority leader raising them today.

I don't intend to support cloture. As I said, there is kind of a breathless quality of coming to the floor with a 4.3-cent gas tax repeal that consumers will probably never see, even if we take the 4.3 cents off. I expect it is going into other pockets long before it gets to the consumer. If it gets done, dye the dollars green and then look around for green pockets someplace. You won't find green at the gas pumps. You will find it somewhere upstream. Some bigger enterprise will pocket that money.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

Mr. DORGAN. There is no disagreement in the Senate about the marriage tax penalty, that it ought not exist. We should change it. There are several different proposals to change it. We ought to come together with respect to one of those proposals.

I will describe one approach to address the marriage tax penalty. I am going to be introducing a piece of legislation at some point in the days ahead with my colleagues, Senator JUDD GREGG, a Republican, and Senator DICK DURBIN, a Democrat, and perhaps others, that would dramatically change the income tax system in this country. This approach would eliminate for a large number of Americans the marriage tax penalty. I have been working on this a couple of years and appreciate the work of Senator GREGG and others.

Over 30 countries that have an income tax system allow people to comply with their income tax without having to file a tax return. How do they do it? They just manipulate their W–4 that is filed with the employer to provide a little more information, and their actual withholding becomes their exact tax liability—no questions. That is your liability, no return filed, no searching for records, no long line at the post office on April 15.

Our country can do that. Our country can do it in a way that will allow 70 million Americans to comply with their income tax responsibilities on April 15 without having to file an income tax return. How do we do it? You take the W–4 form when you sign in with your employer and you say: I have four children. I own a home—check that box. Check about three or four boxes. From that, you provide opportunities for the deduction for, on average, a mortgage interest deduction, and a couple of other things. A table is then provided by the Internal Revenue Service that sets forth the exact amount of taxes that the employer will withhold and send the IRS, and that is the end of the transaction. You are not going to be hassled or forced to search for receipts; you are not going to wait in a long line at the post office to get your income tax return postmarked by April 15.

Now, in doing that, this plan will also eliminate the marriage tax penalty. But the plan only applies to people making $50,000 a year or less in wages, if they are single, or $100,000 a year or less, if they are married filing jointly. If they have less than $2,500 in other income such as interest, dividends or capital gains if they are single, or $5,000 or less in such other income if they are married and filed jointly, they are eligible to check the box that says, yes, I want to use the Fair and Simple Shortcut Tax plan, the FASST plan, which means I don't have to file a tax return. My withholding will be adjusted at my place of work, and the withholding will be sent to the IRS and there is no tax return.

Simple, yes. It is the only plan I know of that discusses simplicity. Everybody who talks about simplifying the tax program, in most cases, ends up proposing things that will make it horribly complicated. This will simplify it—but not for everybody.

Some people have unusual income characteristics, with four different jobs, and investments, and capital gains of $20,000 or $40,000 a year. It won't work for them. For the majority of the American people whose only income is their wage at work and they have a de minimis amount of other income in capital gains or interest—$5,000 a year if they are married and filing jointly—all that other income will be tax free. So that is the incentive for savings and investment; that is the right incentive. All of the wage income—after several major deductions—up to $50,000 single and $100,000 married filing jointly—will be taxed at the single lowest rate. This plan extends the bottom rate and provides a de minimis amount of income tax free and you don't have to file a tax return anymore.

That makes a lot of sense to me and a fellow named Bill Gale at the Brookings Institution, who has done a lot of work on this issue of return-free filing. We are going to introduce legislation, which has been underway for a year and a half, I hope within the next week. As I indicated, Senator JUDD GREGG of New Hampshire has agreed to cosponsor, and Senator DURBIN and, I hope, others, so we can begin discussing real simplification for tens of millions of Americans who always do the right thing. They always file a tax return, they always fill it out correctly, and they believe as an American it is their responsibility because we do things, as a country, to provide for a common defense, to build roads and schools, and to provide for a whole series of things. They understand their obligation to pay for the cost of a civilized society, to pay for the cost of democracy. But they ought to be able to do it in a way that is far simpler than the current system, and that is what we intend to accomplish with this legislation.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Under the previous order, the Senator from Alaska is recognized.

THE FEDERAL FUELS TAX HOLIDAY OF THE YEAR 2000

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I am very pleased today to join with the majority leader, Senator LOTT, Senator CRAIG, Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, and a number of Senators on a very important piece of legislation that is before this body, entitled ''The Federal Fuels Tax Holiday of the Year 2000.''

This legislation is necessary because it will put a brake on the ever-rising gasoline prices that American families face every day. Unlike the airlines, the American family can't pass on the increased price in gasoline. Recently, the truckers came to Washington to express their concerns about the gas tax.

Energy and the cost of energy affects all of us in our lives in varying ways. So the idea of putting the brake on the ever-increasing gasoline prices that American families pay each day is very important.

It is my hope that we invoke cloture tomorrow to ensure that the American motorist and workers get a break.

Our legislation provides a tax holiday for all Americans, from the gas tax, that Democrats, with Vice President GORE casting the deciding vote, adopted in 1993. That 30 percent gas tax hike was the centerpiece of one of the largest tax increases in American history and we believe with gas prices approaching $2 a gallon in some parts of the country, the American motorist should not have to continue paying the Gore tax.

I don't know if all my colleagues on the other side would agree with that nomenclature, but I think it is appropriate since the Vice President broke the tie which added a 30-percent gas hike.

In addition to temporarily ending the Clinton/Gore gas tax, our legislation guarantees that if the failed Clinton/Gore energy policies result in the price of gasoline rising over $2 a gallon, all fuel taxes will be lifted until the end of the year.

That means the American motorist will be relieved of the 18.4-cent-per-gallon gas tax. The trucking industry will not have to pay the 24.4-cent-per-gallon diesel tax. Barge operators will be relieved of the 4.4-cent-per-gallon inland waterway tax, and commercial and noncommercial aircraft operators will be relieved of the aviation tax.

It is certainly my hope that average gasoline prices do not rise above $2. But it is clear to me that $2 gasoline is well within the probability of becoming a reality because despite the administration's claims of victory about last week's OPEC meeting, Americans should not expect much, if any, of a price decline at the gas pump. Why? Let's look at it.

OPEC's decision to increase production by 1.7 million barrels per day is not, in my opinion, even a hollow victory for the Administration's, which lobbied for a minimum increase of 2.5 million barrels. The reality is that there isn't a real 1.7-million-barrel increase by OPEC.

Why do I say that? Let's look at the arithmetic.

OPEC agreed last year to 23 million barrels as their quota of production. They cheated by an additional 1.2 barrels, moving it up to 24.2. As a consequence, the difference between 1.2 and what they said we got as an increase of 1.7 is only 500,000 barrels of real increase. OPEC makes up 15.8 percent of American imports. As a result, we will be lucky to see another 78,000 barrels of oil in our market.

Will 78,000 barrels make a dent in gasoline prices? Not likely. Consider that motorists in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area use more than 121,000 barrels of oil in a single day.

With no relief in sight for the American motorist, we believe that the Gore fuel tax should be temporarily lifted. That would save American motorists about 4.4 barrels over the next 8 months.

If gasoline goes above $2, our bill suspends all fuel taxes resulting in a $19 billion saving to American motorists, truckers, barge operators, and airlines at the same time that fuel prices are near an all-time high. I believe the Government should suspend those taxes and ease the financial burden OPEC has placed on the American motorist and the industries that rely on fuel to move goods throughout this country.

I know some are concerned, if we suspend these taxes, that the highway trust fund, which finances roads, bridges, and mass transit, could be in danger. Again, I would like to put that fear to rest.

Our legislation ensures that the Highway Trust Fund will not lose a single penny during this tax holiday. We require that all monies that would have gone into the fund had the taxes not been suspended be replaced by other Federal revenue. That could come from the on-budget surplus, as I have indicated, or from what I would like to see, which is a reduction of wasteful Federal spending.

I can assure the American motorist that highway construction projects this year and next year will be unaffected by the tax holiday that we are proposing. And when the trust fund is fully restored, all projects scheduled for beyond 2002 will be completed.

Some of the colleagues believe it is a mistake to establish a precedent wherein general revenues are used to finance highway construction. Ordinarily, I might agree with them, but not in this case.

All of my colleagues should remember that when the Clinton/Gore 4.3-cent gasoline tax was adopted in 1993, not a single penny of that tax was dedicated to highway or bridge construction. All the money was earmarked for Federal spending.

As I stated earlier, it was not until the Republicans adopted the 1997 highway bill that we shifted the 4.3-cent-per-gallon tax back to the highway trust fund.

Further, as I have indicated, Americans have paid $42 billion since the Gore tax went into effect. Of that $42 billion, $28 billion was spent not on highways but on general government and went into the general fund.

Let me repeat that. Of the $42 billion Americans paid under the GORE tax, $28 billion was spent not on highways but on general government.

I believe under these circumstances that it is perfectly reasonable for general revenues to be used to repay the trust fund money that should have been spent on highways.

The question before the Senate today is very simple. Do Senators want to give American motorists a break at the gas pump when gas prices are at near record highs?

I think it is important for everybody to understand that we are the elected representatives of the people. What is their choice? Do the people want to have relief from the gas tax? Is that their priority?

We have polling information that I will submit for the RECORD that indicates overwhelming support for relief at the gas pump. I think the polling clearly shows that the American public, when offered an opportunity to reduce taxes, would much rather take it and run.

A Gallup Poll released last week found that although Americans think high prices are only temporary, they believe several things should be done to reduce taxes.

Eighty percent of the American people—I hope my colleagues and staff are listening and will take notes—favor lowering gas taxes. Seventy-four percent—nearly three out of every four Americans—think that a temporary reduction of the gas tax is a worthy solution. That is three out of four.

Think about that. Seventy-four percent of Americans think a temporary reduction in the gas tax is a worthy solution.

Think about where we are and what the administration is telling us.

First of all, since I have been speaking about policies of the administration and the position of our Vice President, I want to refer to an article that appeared on October 23, 1999, in the State Times Morning Advocate at Baton Rouge, LA. The Vice President says he would be more antidrilling than other Presidents. More anti-drilling? Let me read the quote.

''I will take the most sweeping steps in our history to protect our oceans and coastal waters from offshore oil drilling,'' he said in a press release. ''I will make sure that there will be no new oil leasing off the Keys of California and Florida, and then I will go much further. I will do everything in my power to make sure that there is no new drilling off these sensitive areas, even in areas leased by previous administrations.''

He would cancel contracts and leases out there that were made by previous administrations.

(Mr. CRAIG assumed the Chair.)

Mr. MURKOWSKI. He further states: Existing leases and what oil and natural gas companies could do with them already are the objects of long-running legal disputes.

He says he would cancel leases in areas already leased by previous administrations.

These are existing leases; where is the sanctity of a contractual commitment? I believe if Florida and California don't want OCS activities off their coast, that is fine; that should prevail if that is what people want. In Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and my State of Alaska, where we produce roughly 22 percent of the total crude oil produced in the United States, these States should go ahead because they want this. They recognize the alternative is not very pleasant—and that is to import more oil.

I leave Members with the very ambiguous reference this administration has given, suggesting things will get better. There is a certain psychology in reassuring citizens that the price will come down. However, in reality, the consumption is up, production is down, we are 56-percent dependent on imports, and the forecast is we will be 65 percent in the year 2015 or thereabouts. These are hardly reassuring notes, taken verbatim from this administration, to suggest things will get better.

In conclusion, from the CBS ''Early Show'' on March 29, 2000, from Secretary Richards, the Secretary was being questioned on his view of whether we could likely see some relief. He states as follows: This means for the American consumer, gasoline prices will gradually and steadily decline, according to the Energy Information Administration and my Department, by as much as 11 cents by the end of September or the end of summer.

That is quite a while. What do we do in the meantime?

Then he says: The bottom line is, I am just quoting our investigators and our official people who are saying 11 cents by the end of summer, possibly 15, 16 cents by the end of the year.

That is an indefinite forecast, in my opinion.

I appeal to the Chair to recognize that we can't believe the Secretary that the price is coming down. Every Member should support this legislation because it will keep the pressure on the administration to ensure it stays below $2 and this tax holiday won't be a reality. It will give the American consumer a safety net. Think about that.

The administration says: Don't worry, prices are on the decline. OK, if prices are on the decline—which I don't believe they are in the short term or the long term, but we will see who is right or wrong—we go ahead and pass the elimination of the 18.4-cent-gallon Federal tax, suspend it for the balance of the year, if the price goes to $2 a gallon for regular. That is a balance that puts the administration on notice to practice what they preach. If they preach the prices are coming down, this will never happen anyway. We are giving the American consumer a safety net. That safety net is real and it says if the price goes up to $2 the 18.4 comes off. I think that is a fair balance.

I will show this chart one more time. I find it outrageous. Who do we look to for imports? We look to Saddam Hussein and Iraq: Last year 300,000; now it is 700,000 barrels a day.

Where does the money go? It is going to Saddam Hussein. We fought a war over there—remember—in 1991. We lost the lives of 147 U.S. men and women. We fought a war to keep Saddam out of Kuwait. What did Saddam do when he lost the war?

Talk about environmental degradation. This is a picture of Kuwait with the oil fields on fire. We see the fires in the background. Here is an American with the firefighters helping put that fire out. That is the kind of guy we are dealing with to depend on imports. We had 23 soldiers taken prisoner over there. It has cost the American taxpayer $10 billion since the war in 1991 to keep Saddam Hussein fenced in enforcing the no-fly zones. Within the last week, we did two bombing runs in Iraq because he was in violation of the no-fly zone, and we had antiaircraft action.

Isn't it incredible? We talk about foreign policy or energy policy of this administration, and we are feeding Saddam Hussein millions and millions of dollars so he can take that cash-flow and pay his Republican Guards who keep him alive. He doesn't funnel that into his economic system for the benefit of his people. He is in cahoots with the North Koreans, developing missile technology and our bombing airplanes are carrying his fuel. How inconsistent, how ironic. Talk about a full circle. We are importing 700,000 barrels a day, we are bombing him, we are using his oil that we refine to fill up our airplanes.

I may be reaching a little bit, but this is reality. We are importing 700,000 barrels a day.

It is my understanding this matter will come up tomorrow and we will have a number of Senators active in the debate on the merits of the basic presentation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURKOWSKI). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY CRISIS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, for the last number of minutes I have listened with great interest to the comments of my good friend from Alaska describing the energy crisis in which our Nation now finds itself. I use the word ''crisis'' with some reservation because my guess is most Americans don't think we are in a crisis. They have good jobs, they probably got raises this year, they feel their jobs are secure, they have plenty of spendable income, and while they may be paying 30 or 40 cents or even 50 cents a gallon more for gas this year than last year, at least the gas is still there and the pump does not say ''no fuel available,'' they don't sense a crisis.

I traveled home to my State of Idaho this weekend. I drove in out to Dulles Airport. I got on a Boeing 777 that burns tens of thousands of gallons of fuel in the course of a day and I paid $70 or $80 more for each one of my tickets because of the cost of jet fuel. As I traveled across the country I found the airports full, of Americans and foreign travelers. Yet no sense of urgency or crisis did they appear to feel.

When I got home to my home State of Idaho and began to travel across the northern end of the State, I saw that spring is breaking out very quickly in the marvelous wheat belt of northern Idaho that spreads into Washington and Oregon over to Pendleton and Wala Wala. It is a highly productive area that oftentimes yields 100 to 110 bushels of wheat per acre annually without benefit of irrigation.

What was out on those rolling wheat fields this weekend? Large 4-wheel-drive tractors, oftentimes pulling 40- and 50-foot spreads of harrows and springtooths, beginning to till the soil, all of them with a 250- or 400-horse diesel engine under the hood of that tractor, burning hundreds of gallons of diesel fuel each day.

This year those farmers will be paying another 50 or 60 cents a gallon for that fuel. Yet this is just the beginning of the growing season in our Nation. We are now tilling and planting. We will spend the summer cultivating and spraying to protect our crops from weeds and insects. Then in the fall, huge combines will roll out on the fields, once again driven by diesel fuel—a source of energy that has historically been so abundant in our country and so relatively inexpensive.

Today, a river conservation group announced that some rivers in our country are endangered because they have been dammed. In the past America has placed large dams across some rivers and put large turbines in the dams to generate electricity. In a relatively cavalier way, this group said that my river, my Snake River of Idaho, is the most endangered. Why? Because of dams. They want the dams removed. Yet those dams produce hundreds of thousands of kilowatts a year to light the cities of Portland and Seattle, Boise and many other cities and towns. And somehow, all in the name of the environment, they cavalierly suggest we start taking down relatively modern structures that produce large amounts of inexpensive electricity without burning fossil fuels.

The reason I draw these verbal pictures today is that no one senses a crisis. This administration, for the last 8 years, has not proposed a single policy initiative that would produce 1 gallon more domestic crude oil for our Nation. In fact, the Clinton/Gore administration has done quite the opposite. They, through punitive environmental policies, have suggested continually that we close more and more federal land to any further oil and gas exploration and production. They have even proposed to take down some of the hydro dams I have talked about, once again all in the name of the environment.

Now, the Clinton/Gore administration has an energy policy of sorts. They have talked a lot about solar and biomass which is not a bad idea as long as we don't kid ourselves into believing they will solve all of our problems. They have also talked about developing more powerful wind energy technology to produce more power—not a bad idea either.

But the myth of that kind of technology is that to replace the dams on the lower Snake River with photovoltaic cells or windmills, the entire State of Idaho would have to be covered with solar cells just to offset the difference. My guess is there would be a Vice President who would reject such an idea because the result would be unsightly. It would destroy the vistas that are so beautiful in my State right now. It would be uncomely to the American environmental eye. And I would agree with him.

But I would not agree with this Vice President, when he stands and says that he will not tolerate drilling offshore California, offshore Florida, offshore our East coast, or in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Clinton/Gore administration has an energy policy of sorts and the Vice President's desire to take down dams, prevent new oil and gas exploration, and instead cover my State of Idaho, or Arizona, or California, with solar cells and wind farms is its hallmark.

The reason I mention these frustrations I have, and I think some Americans share, is that for a good long while now we have not had a consistent energy policy for our country that is a combination of all these things: Research for new technology, conservation so we use less and gain more from it, while at the same time producing as much of our own fossil fuel resources as possible.

In just a decade or so, we have increased our electrical generation by some 200 percent by the use of coal, but we have reduced the sulfur oxide emissions from coal during that same time by over 20 percent. Through technology, we are using more fossil fuels more efficiently and more cleanly and more of our electricity is generated with such fuels. That is the way you do it. You do not take those kinds of sources off line; you say those are the sources that can generate the abundance of power that drives our industries and heats and cools our homes.

So let's be wiser and smarter with our technology than just saying to a certain political interest, I am with you, we will just take that all out of production and off line, because it does not fit somebody's environmental agenda.

Among all the things the rivers conservation group said today, about taking dams out on the Snake River, there is something they did not say. They did not say the removal of those dams would destroy the barge traffic on the Snake-Columbia River system. All of the grain and timber and paper and coal that now travels the river in barges would have to move in 18-wheel trucks over the highways of the Pacific Northwest. Tens of thousands more trucks would have to be employed to haul the freight and replace the slack water transportation system that would be destroyed were the dams removed.

Is that an environmentally sound thing to do, to employ thousands and thousands more trucks, burning hundreds of gallons of diesel fuel a day? I think not. But, of course, that is not a headline. That does not make the kind of press they thought they could make by their release today, all in the name of the environment, all in the name of saving fish.

We will probably debate, on this floor in the next decade, the removal of dams, whether in my State or somewhere else, as it relates to energy policy and protection of the environment and valuable fish. I hope at that time the American people can be given all the facts. I think, when given all the facts and when allowed to view all the alternatives of technology and retrofitting dams, Americans will understand that abundant, inexpensive hydro power energy, can be had along with a clean environment and strong salmon runs.

They will also understand the extent to which farmers and ranchers need abundant, relatively inexpensive supplies of energy to produce the food and fiber our Nation needs. Those commodities were being planted in the soils of north Idaho this weekend by the large

4-wheel-drive diesel tractors pulling 50-foot spreads of equipment I talked about at the beginning of my statement. They had to use energy to accomplish it.

I will also discuss legislation, with which we will deal in the near future, to alleviate some of the concerns about energy policy in the short term and the cost to the consumer while Congress struggles to develop a long-term policy to increase energy production in our country.

I do support legislation that will give us a temporary Federal tax holiday from energy taxes of the kind thrust upon this country by the Clinton-Gore administration several years ago when they argued it was necessary to tax fuel consumption to reduce the deficit structure and the debt structure of our country.

I did not support the tax then, and several years later I was one of those who changed the tax from going into the general fund to reduce the deficit to going into the trust funds of transportation, because up until this President came to town, we had never taxed the American people at the gas pump to fund the general fund expenditures of our Government. We had taxed them only to put it in the transportation trust funds that build the roads, bridges, and infrastructure all of us expect and enjoy and the infrastructure on which our economy runs—goods and services that traffic across America on a daily basis.

One way to give some short-term relief to the American consumer, as these energy prices have gone up, is to reduce for a short term the 4.3-cent-a-gallon gas tax; take it off the pump; take it away from the consumer and allow that tax to stay in the consumer's pocket. The reason is, what does it mean with the current runup in fuel prices? Matt Lauer said the other day on the ''Today'' show: The energy crisis may be over in the short term. Meaning the Secretary had been to the Middle East, he begged and cajoled the producers in the Middle East to turn the valve on a little bit. Then as the spokesperson for energy policy in this country, the Secretary announced to the American people that gas prices were going to come down some maybe. The ''some maybe'' is that maybe they will come down a little bit, but they are still going to be 40 to 50 cents a gallon higher than they were a year ago. There is some belief in the marketplace, depending on whom you study and whom you believe and who has the right information, that the supply the OPEC nations promised may not be as large as promised and, therefore, by late summer we could see an average of $2 prices across this country.

We are going to have to wait and watch for that one. None of us know what the price of gas will be in July or August, but it is going to be a lot higher than it was a year ago. It will, in many ways, determine how the American consumer utilizes his or her free time this year as they think about a vacation, whether it is in the family car, the van, or the SUV, or whether it is booking airline tickets to travel across this country. In all instances, the cost of that leisure time Americans so enjoy will be substantially more expensive than it was a year ago.

I am talking about leisure time. I am not talking about the weekly commute, the daily commute. I am not talking about the goods and services that traffic on America's trucks across our Nation on a daily basis or the food we buy at the local supermarket, all having been transported by trucks that are paying substantially more for fuel.

How much more are truckers now paying and how much will they have to pass through to the consumer as these prices go up?

Diesel fuel costs exceeded $2.10 a gallon in the Northeast this spring. That is a doubling of cost in about a year. The average nationwide was about $1.50 a gallon. To the driver of an 18-wheeler freight truck that traffics America's highways hauling our goods and services, it will mean an additional $150 to $200 to fill his or her tank on a daily basis or a 24-hour transportation period. If they are to stay alive as a business, they have to pass that cost directly through to the consumer: a little here on food prices; a little there on the cost of a piece of carpet; a little somewhere else on any of the goods and services that ultimately the American consumer buys.

Of course, that is the same cost the American farmer is experiencing when he or she cannot pass it on, because they cannot set the price of the commodity they will be selling this fall by an extra 10 cents or 15 cents a hundredweight to offset the cost of the diesel fuel and all of the petrochemicals they will use this year in the production of America's food sources.

To the consumer—that is you and me—who is commuting to work or considering a family vacation, another 60, 70, or 80 cents a gallon could well mean another $10.50 a tankful every time we pull into the service station. Did they put that in the family budget in January? Did they really plan to pay $300 or $400 more this year, including their trips and all of their other expenses? I do not think so. I do not think anyone considered that. Yet that is what one ought to have considered if they have a true and honest budget.

That is why, when recently polled, the American people are beginning to figure out that maybe a 4.3-cent-a-gallon tax reduction for the short term is a good idea to offset at least some of these new costs in energy. Eighty percent of them said the Congress of the United States ought to reduce that tax, at least for the short term, to help compensate for this runup in energy prices we have seen.

I am talking about short-term policy. It does not produce a gallon more of domestic crude oil. It does not in any way provide the reliable sources our country has grown to expect over time in a nation that has experienced relatively inexpensive energy.

Many of our conservation and environmental friends are saying we ought to be paying as much as Europe pays or as much as the rest of the world pays. That is another $1, $2 a gallon, in some instances, and, therefore, we would rely less upon our vehicles and change our lifestyles. Some day we might have to do that, but all of those costs would have to be spread across an economy, and the general cost of living in this country will go up dramatically.

Mr. President, you and I, as consumers in this economy, will have to make choices about how we spend our disposable income and how we spend our income for goods and services. We will have to live a different lifestyle than the one we currently have, if our attitude is only to drive up the cost of energy instead of finding conservation sources and alternative sources and maintaining at least a substantial level of production of crude oil from our own domestic sources.

Last week, this Senate, by 1 vote, recognized the importance of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as a potential producer of 16 billion barrels of crude oil, production that will be done in a fragile area of our country but can be done in an environmentally sound way based on new technologies.

We listen to a Department of Energy that says energy dependence on foreign sources will go up to 65 percent by the year 2010 if we continue the same policy, so says Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson. What he did not say is that to be 65-percent dependent upon foreign sources will require an estimated 12,000 more huge oil tanker dockings each year in the United States. Will that be done safely? In most instances, it will. Will there be a risk with thousands and thousands of more of these supertankers on our open oceans? Will there be some kind of environmental problem? You bet there will. In fact, that is the weak link in the whole process. We have a Vice President who says no drilling offshore because of environmental fragility, and yet by saying that, he is advocating thousands of more supertankers on the open ocean.

Go back and look at the record over the last decade. We have not had environmental problems with offshore drilling. But every so often, one of these big tankers runs ashore and spills crude into very fragile environmental areas.

So, Mr. Vice President, get honest with the American people. Look at a total package of energy policy that produces onshore in safe environmental ways, and that looks at some of the alternatives you are proposing for wind and solar. I do not deny that any of those has certain value.

I suggest that our energy basket, as a nation, be full of all kinds of alternatives but at the same time recognize the base: the conventional forms of energy that drives our agriculture, that drives our industry, and that provides us with the kind of lifestyle Americans expect, and ought to expect, from a free, powerful nation such as ours.

Let me close with these thoughts because we do not often talk about national security. We talk about ourselves, our personal security, our family's security, our food security. Those are the things I have been talking about for the last 10 or 15 minutes. Those are the things that come to our minds immediately when we think we have to spend more of our income on them. Is the food going to be there? Can we live the lifestyle we have had if energy reasonably available?

Here is what Commerce Secretary Daley recently reported to our President. In all honesty, this report was on the President's desk, but he wasn't saying anything about it until Senator FRANK MURKOWSKI, the chairman of the Senate Energy Committee, stood up and said: Mr. President, you have a report on your desk. You ought to talk about it a little bit. You ought to tell the American people what your own Commerce Secretary is telling you.

The President wrote to the Secretary that he concurred with the Secretary's findings and that current policies should aid in dealing with our dependence on imported oil. Secretary Daley said in his report that ''. . . imports of crude oil threaten to impair the national security of this country.''

What does the Secretary mean? He means we are not as stable as we were, as strong as we were. We are dependent upon foreign sources for a lot of our energy. We did not send Secretary Richardson to Houston to talk to the oil producers of Texas or to Anchorage to talk to the oil producers of Alaska. We sent him to the most unstable political area in the world, the Middle East. We begged the sheiks, the producers: Please, please, give us just a little oil. We fought a war for you. We saved you. We saved your palaces. We saved your airplanes and your lifestyles and your limousines. Oh, it cost us 140 American lives, but we saved you. So would you please give us a little oil? Because you are really cramping our lifestyle. What you are doing may damage our economy and put hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work.

I do not think Mr. Richardson said it quite like that, but that is what he, in essence, was saying. He was admitting that we are vulnerable. That is why Secretary Daley told the President we are becoming more dependent on foreign sources, our national security is at risk.

What did the President say? He said: I accept your recommendation that existing policies to enhance conservation and limit dependency on foreign oil ought to be continued. But not one energy proposal has come forth from this administration, except the current budget which has large increases in solar cell and wind technology budgets and hardly any increases for nuclear or hydro technology, hardly any increase in clean coal technology research that could help the large, coal-fired, electrical-energy-producing plants of our Nation.

The President was warned this year by the Secretary of Commerce. In 1995, the President was also warned by the Secretary of Commerce that ''. . . The Nation's growing reliance on imports of crude oil and refined petroleum products threatens the Nation's security because they increase U.S. vulnerability to oil supply interruption.'' That was in 1995.

In late 1998, the OPEC nations were scratching their heads. They weren't making any mont with oil prices at $10-a-barrel. So, t decided to reduce production and drive up prices.

They did just that. We saw crude oil prices, in less than a year, go from $10 a barrel to $34 a barrel. That is why I am on the floor today. That is why House Members and Senate Members have been talking about energy policy in the last several months.

We have known it was coming. We have warned the administration for years. Six months ago, our colleagues from the Northeast warned of a runup in home heating fuel prices and what that would do to their constituents. But has this administration done anything about it? No, not anything of consequence.

The Vice President has been outspoken about no new offshore drilling.

He has been outspoken about needing higher taxes for fossil fuels so we would become less reliant upon the internal combustion engine. But nowhere has he suggested increased domestic oil and gas production.

We will debate this week, and I hope we will pass, a temporary Federal tax holiday that will allow the American consumer just a little relief in a time when our Nation's energy policy has failed the American consume. At the same time Congress will look at both short-term and long-term policy in an attempt to create more stability in price and supply.

This is an important issue. We will hear a great deal more about it in days to come if prices at the pump average $2 a gallon at the height of the summer driving season.

When I began these comments, I talked about an energy crisis. The scenario I tried to describe over the last several minutes is that there is, in fact, a crisis going on in our country. It is relatively quiet at the moment. But it is a crisis. We aren't producing enough oil and gas. The White House has no will to build an effective energy policy and will not tell the American people truth about its failures in this regard. We need to find ways to increase oil and gas production, to deal boldly with our neighbors in the Middle East on matters of their physical security and our energy security. The administration has not been very firm with our allies. We are there providing security today, yet we have to beg for our energy.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

IN SUPPORT OF THE DECENNIAL CENSUS

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, during last week's consideration of S. Con. Res. 101, the congressional budget resolution, the Senate by voice vote agreed to a modified amendment (amendment 3028) offered by the Senator from New Hampshire (Senator SMITH) that:

> Assume(s) that no American will be prosecuted, fined or in anyway harassed by the Federal government or its agents for failure to respond to any census questions which refer to an individual's race, national origin, living conditions, personal habits or mental and/or physical condition, but that all Americans are encouraged to send in their census forms.

There are serious consequences for state, local, and Federal Government when people are missed by the census. There are approximately 1,327 federal domestic assistance programs that use population information in some way. The breadth of the programs affected that touch families and businesses throughout the nation clearly spells out the need to ensure that all Americans are counted. The questions asked by the census represent a balance between the needs of our nation's communities and the need to keep the time and effort required to complete the form to a minimum. Federal and state funds for schools, employment services, housing assistance, road construction, day care facilities, hospitals, emergency services, programs for seniors, and much more are distributed based on census figures.

The percentage of people undercounted in Hawaii—1.9 percent—was higher than the national average, and the largest component of the undercount by race was projected to be Asians and Pacific Islanders. I was so concerned that Hawaii would once more have a higher than average undercount that on March 14, 2000, I held a forum in Hawaii on the Census 2000. At that forum, I urge Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders to take advantage of the 2000 Census as an opportunity to be accurately represented in data and statistics that will impact our lives for the next 10 years. During the forum, which was attended by Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA from American Samoa, Hawaii's Lieutenant Governor Mazie Hirono, representatives from the Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Interior, and various Native Hawaiian and Other

Pacific Islander organizations, I strongly urged everyone to answer their questionnaires.

The Senate agreed to the Smith amendment, as modified, on April 7, 2000. However, if there is no objection, I am submitting to the RECORD a statement by Census Director Kenneth Prewitt, regarding the Sense of the Senate amendment, Number 3028 to the concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 101:

The Census Bureau is required by law to collect a complete response from every resident in America to both the census short and long forms. Today's sense of the Senate amendment would undermine the quality of information from both forms. Census 2000 is not designed by law as a pick and choose exercise. Serious degradation of census information will negatively affect economic policy-making, public sector expenditures and private sector investment for a decade.

The census procedures require enumerators in the non-response follow up phase to make six attempts to collect information. Congress would have to advise the Census Bureau whether six attempts (or even a single attempt) would constitute harassment.

Kenneth Prewitt,
Director, U.S. Census Bureau,
April 7, 2000.

Madam President, I suggest the absence after quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MATHEMATICS EDUCATION MONTH

● Mr. GRAMS. Madam President, Galileo understood the importance of mathematics when he said, ''Mathematics is the alphabet with which God has created the universe.'' I proudly rise today in recognition of Mathematics Education Month. Additionally, I take this opportunity to applaud the tireless efforts of our nation's math teachers.

The importance of a strong mathematical education is indisputable. Our math skills prove invaluable on a daily basis. Without them we could not perform simple tasks such as buying groceries, following a recipe, or balancing our checkbooks, much less plan for our retirement or buy a home. Here in Congress, mathematical skills are essential to comprehending the incredibly complex issues of Social Security reform, taxes, and the federal budget process.

My home state of Minnesota boasts some of the best math educators in the country, dedicated men and women who have inspired a lifetime of learning in countless students. This has been proven time and again by Minnesota's status as a national leader in ACT and SAT math scores. Nevertheless, we should continue to make improvements and not be satisfied with our success.

One organization in my state deserves special accolades for its ongoing efforts to initiate those improvements. The Minnesota Council of Teachers of Mathematics is dedicated to the constant betterment of mathematical education at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. The Council's advocacy results in an ongoing effort to raise the bar for better education. I commend its members for their devotion to creating an awareness and interest in mathematics among young people.

As classrooms across America labor over long division, tangents and derivatives this month, it is my hope that students, parents, and teachers alike will reflect on the significance of mathematics in our society and join me in celebrating Mathematics Education Month.●

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

● Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, this week from April 9–15 we are celebrating the 42nd anniversary of ''National Library Week.'' As a strong and vigorous supporter of Federal initiatives to strengthen and protect libraries, I am pleased to take this opportunity to draw my colleagues' attention to this important occasion and to take a few moments to reflect on the significance of libraries to our nation.

When the free public library came into its own in this country in the 19th century, it was, from the beginning, a unique institution because of its commitment to the same principle of free and open exchange of ideas as the Constitution itself. Libraries have always been an integral part of all that our country embodies: freedom of information, an educated citizenry, and an open and enlightened society. They are the only public agencies in which the services rendered are intended for, and available to, every segment of our society.

It has been my longstanding view that libraries play an indispensable role in our communities. From modest beginnings in the mid-19th century, today's libraries provide well-stocked reference centers and wide-ranging loan services based on a system of branches, often further supplemented by travelling libraries serving outlying districts. Libraries promote the reading of books among adults, adolescents, and children and provide the access and resources to allow citizens to obtain reliable information on a vast array of topics.

Libraries gain even further significance in this age of rapid technological advancement where they are called upon to provide not only books and periodicals, but many other valuable resources as well. In today's society, libraries provide audio-visual materials, computer services, internet access terminals, facilities for community lectures and performances, tapes, records, videocassettes, and works of art for exhibit and loan to the public. In addition, special facilities libraries provide services for older Americans, people with disabilities, and hospitalized citizens.

Of course, libraries are not merely passive repositories of materials. They are engines of learning—the place where a spark is often struck for disadvantaged citizens who for whatever reason have not had exposure to the vast stores of knowledge available. I have the greatest respect for those individuals who are members of the library community and work so hard to ensure that our citizens and communities continue to enjoy the tremendous rewards available through our library system.

As we celebrate National Library Week, it should be noted that the Library of Congress will be 200 years old on April 24, 2000. The Library of Congress represents the oldest federal cultural institution in America. As we approach this birthday celebration, we should recognize that all libraries represent the cornerstone of knowledge in our local communities.

My own State of Maryland has 24 public library systems providing a full range of library services to all Maryland citizens and a long tradition of open and unrestricted sharing of resources. This policy has been enhanced by the State Library Network which provides interlibrary loans to the State's public, academic, special libraries and school library media centers. The Network receives strong support from the State Library Resource Center at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Regional Library Resource Centers in Western, Southern, and Eastern Shore counties, and a Statewide database of holdings totalling 178 libraries.

The State Library Resource Center alone gives Marylanders free access to approximately 2 million books and bound magazines, over 1 million U.S. Government documents, 600,000 documents in microform, 11,000 periodicals, 90,000 maps, 20,000 Maryland State documents, and over 19,000 videos and films.

The result of this unique joint State-County resource sharing is an extraordinary level of library services available to the citizens of Maryland. Marylanders have responded to this outstanding service by borrowing more public library materials per person than citizens of almost any other State, with 67 percent of the State's population registered as library patrons.

I have had a close working relationship with members of the Maryland Library Association and others involved in the library community throughout the State, and I am very pleased to join with them and citizens throughout the nation in this week's celebration of ''National Library Week.'' I look forward to a continued close association with those who enable libraries to provide the unique and vital services available to all Americans.●

MR. DONALD T. STORCK HONORED AS LUTHERAN LAYMAN OF THE YEAR 2000

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Mr. Donald T. Storck, who on Tuesday, April 11, 2000, will be honored by the Lutheran Luncheon Club of Metropolitan Detroit as its Lutheran Layman of the Year 2000. This is the 46th year the Luncheon Club has named a Layman of the Year, and I cannot imagine that any have been more deserving than Mr. Storck. For over thirty-five years, he has displayed a dedication to both his community and his church that are representative of an incredible desire to help others.

Mr. Storck was born in raised in Saint Louis, Missouri. He began working for General Motors in their St. Louis Chevrolet Plant in 1957. In 1964, after graduating from Washington University, he was transferred to the G.M. Building in Detroit, where he worked as an engineer. He and his wife, Ethel Steinmann, settled down in Royal Oak, Michigan, and they have lived there, and been members of the St. Paul Lutheran Church, ever since.

In his thirty-six years in Royal Oak, Mr. Storck has contributed to the community in many ways. Before recycling had become popular, he was part of a paper drive activity that raised over $60,000 for building projects. He has been very active in supporting the Boy Scouts of America, involving himself in a program at the G.M. Willow Run Transmission Plant. He sits on the Board of Directors of the Royal Oak Penguins, a youth swimming club. As a volunteer for Focus: HOPE, he has spent one Saturday per month delivering food to elderly and shut-in individuals. He has worked on many Habitat for Humanity projects, is a teacher of an after-school elementary woodworking class for 1st and 2nd grade youth at the Huntington Woods Community Center, and a regular donor of blood and blood platelets.

His devotion to the religious community has been equally impressive. He currently serves on the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees of St. Paul Lutheran Church, and sings in the Men's Chorus and Chancel Choir. This is in addition to serving as chief chef of the men's breakfast, a tradition which he founded. He is the current president of the Lutheran Choralaires, a popular male chorus which performs regularly throughout the metropolitan Detroit area. He has been a member of the Lutheran Laymen's League Retreat Committee, and volunteers time at the group's annual retreat. He has also been very active in the Lutheran Luncheon Club, serving as its president in 1984–85, its secretary from 1986–1995, and has sat on the Board of Directors for the last five years.

Recently, he has donated much of his time to helping Grace Lutheran Church in Durham, North Carolina. This ministry provides for the transport of children to and from Belaruse and places these children with host families while they receive needed surgical and medical care at the Duke University Hospital. Mr. Storck discovered the ministry when he was at the Duke University Hospital visiting his youngest grandchild, Mollie, who died at the age of two after a battle with leukemia. At a time when Mr. Storck's faith was put to the test, it never wavered; he remained committed to the church and to helping others in the name of God.

Madam President, I applaud Mr. Storck on his many contributions to both his church and his community. He is truly a role model, and I applaud the Lutheran Luncheon Club for taking the opportunity to recognize him as such. On behalf of the entire United States Senate, I congratulate Mr. Donald R. Storck on being named the 46th Lutheran Layman of the Year.●

EXPANDING ACCESS TO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

● Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, it has been over 30 years since I set off on my hunger tour of South Carolina, where I observed first-hand the shocking condition of health care and nutritional habits in rural parts of my state. The good news is, we have come a long way since then. The bad news is, there is still much work to be done. Like the ''hunger myopia'' I described in my book ''The Case Against Hunger,'' we suffer today from a sort of ''health care myopia,'' a condition in which a booming economy and low unemployment rates mask a reality—that many Americans eke out a living in society's margins, and most of them lack health insurance. Ironically, as the stock market soars, so do the numbers of uninsured in our country, at a rate of more than 100,000 each month; 53 million Americans are expected to be uninsured by 2007.

The health care debate swirls around us, reaching fever pitch in Congress, where I have faith that we will soon reach an agreement on expanding coverage and other important issues. However, I see a need to immediately address the health care concerns of these left-behind and sometimes forgotten citizens. They cannot and should not have to wait for Congress to hammer out health care reform in order to receive the medical care so many of us take for granted. That's why I sponsored, along with Senator BOND, a sense-of-the-Senate amendment to double the funding for health centers over the next five years. The Bond-Hollings Resolution to Expand Access to Community Health Centers (REACH) recommends that we start the process with a $150 million increase in FY 2001. Let me emphasize that this measure is a cost-saving investment, not an increase in spending.

While ideas about health care have changed dramatically, community health centers have remained steadfast in their mission, quietly serving their communities and doing a tremendous job. Last year, community health centers served 11 million Americans in decrepit inner-city neighborhoods as well as remote rural areas, 4.5 million of which were uninsured. It's no wonder these centers have won across-the-board, bipartisan support. They have a proven track record of providing no-nonsense, preventive and primary medical services at rock-bottom costs. They're the value retailers of the health care industry, if you will, treating a patient at a cost of less than $1.00 per day, or about $350 annually.

Not only are these centers providing care at low costs, but they are saving precious health care dollars. An increased investment in health centers will mean fewer uninsured patients are forced to make costly emergency room visits to receive basic care and fewer will utilize hospitals' specialty and inpatient care resources. As a consequence, a major financial burden is lifted from traditional hospitals and government and private health plans. Every federal grant dollar invested in health centers saves $7 for Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance: $6 from lower use of specialty and inpatient care and $1 from reduced emergency room visits.

The value of community health centers can be measured in two other significant ways. First of all, the centers' focus on wellness and prevention, services largely unavailable to uninsured people, will lead to savings in treatment down the road. And secondly, health centers foster growth and development in their communities, shoring up the very people they serve. They generate over $14 billion in annual economic activity in some of the nation's most economically depressed areas, employing 50,000 people and training thousands of health professionals and volunteers.

It should also be noted that community health centers are just that—community-based. They are not cookie cutter programs spun from the federal government wheel, but area-specific, locally-managed centers tailored to the unique needs of a community. They are governed by consumer boards composed of patients who utilize the center's services, as well as local business, civic and community leaders. In fact, it is stipulated that center clients make up at least 51 percent of board membership. This set-up not only ensures accountability to the local community and taxpayers, but keeps a constant check on each center's effectiveness in addressing community needs.

In South Carolina, community health centers have a long history of meeting the care requirements of the areas they serve. The Beaufort-Jasper Comprehensive Health Center in Ridgeland, the Franklin C. Fetter Family Health Center in Charleston, and Family Health

Centers, Inc. in Orangeburg were among the first community health centers established in the nation. The Beaufort-Jasper Center was very innovative for its day, in the late 1960s, tackling not only health care needs, but related needs for clean water, indoor toilets and other sanitary services. Today, the number of South Carolina health centers has grown to 15. They currently provide more than 167,000 people, 10 percent of which are uninsured, with a wide range of primary car services. Yet despite the success story, a need to throw a wider net is obvious. Of the 3.8 million South Carolinians, nearly 600,000 have no form of health insurance. That means roughly 15% of the state population is uninsured. Another 600,000 residents are "underinsured," meaning that they do not receive comprehensive health care coverage from their insurance plans and must pay out-of-pocket for a number of specialty services, procedures, tests and medications.

South Carolina's statistics are mirrored nationwide. The swelling ranks of the uninsured are outgrowing our present network of community health centers. Adopting this sense of the Senate amendment will ensure the reach of community health centers expands to meet increasing demand. It is our responsibility to continue providing our neediest citizens with a basic health care safety net. What better way to do that than by building on a program with a record of positive, fiscally responsible results? Everyone can benefit and take pride in such a worthwhile investment.●

THE NEED TO SUPPORT THE U.S.T.T.I.

● Mr. INOUYE. Madam President, I rise today to call attention to a recent New York Times article, "India's Unwired Villages Mired in the Distant Past." It is because of the struggles developing nations face, as illustrated in the article, that I support the United States Telecommunications Training Institute (USTTI) and their work to increase access to telecommunications.

The USTTI is a nonprofit joint venture connecting the public and private sectors, providing tuition-free communications and broadcast training to professionals from around the world. USTTI is geared toward meeting the common training needs of the women and men who are bringing modern communications to the developing world.

The development of the telecommunications industry may be seen as a solution to economic troubles in developing nations. The New York Times article I referred to earlier states, ". . . the wonders of telecommunications technology—distance learning, telemedicine, the Internet—offer a way out of the 'old India'," where illiteracy, disease, and poverty punctuate the countryside. This scenario is not isolated to India, but may be applied to many developing nations throughout the world. In each instance, a big part of the solution is the deployment of modern telecommunications technology.

The USTTI has been working to bring modern telecommunication services to the developing world for 18 years. The USTTI has offered 935 tuition-free courses and has graduated 5,574 men and women who are now helping to make modern telecommunications a reality in their 161 respective countries. The program participants are government officials responsible for developing and implementing telecommunications policies in their countries.

By allowing developing countries to capitalize fully on the increased educational opportunities provided through the USTTI, countries prosper economically and connect themselves to the modern world.

Madam President, I ask that the full text of the New York Times article be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the New York Times, Mar. 19, 2000]

INDIA'S UNWIRED VILLAGES MIRED IN THE DISTANT PAST

(By Celia W. Dugger)

HYDERABAD, INDIA, MARCH 15.—Cyber Towers rises from the campus of a software technology park here, a sleek Internet-connected symbol of the new India that is feverishly courting foreign investment, selling its wares in the global marketplace and creating wealth at an astonishing rate.

But less than 50 miles away, in the poverty-stricken village of Sheri Ram Reddy Guda, the old India is alive and unwell. Illiteracy, sickness and hunger are the villagers' constant companions. Women and children work in the fields for less than 50 cents a day. The sole telephone—an antique contraption of batteries and antennae—almost never works.

Like most of the villagers, Muhammad Hussain, an unlettered field hand in a ragged loin cloth, has never seen a computer, but offered that he did once watch an office worker at a typewriter. "I saw the fingers moving, but I did not know what was being written," he said.

The chasm between India's educated elite and its impoverished multitudes worries economists, politicians and some software entrepreneurs.

Because of the extraordinary success of Indian engineers in Silicon Valley and the Indian software industry's sales to American companies, India and the United States have forged strong economic ties in high technology. President Clinton will acknowledge those links next Friday with a visit to Hitec City, where Microsoft, Oracle and Metamor are ensconced in the air conditioned comfort of Cyber Towers.

But during his five-day whirlwind tour of five Indian cities, the president will spend little time in the villages, where almost three-quarters of this country's billion people still live and struggle for the basic necessities.

At a time when India's software industry is creating a glamorous digerati and driving a dizzying escalation in stock values on the Bombay exchange, the boom has stirred a debate about the country's social and economic priorities, as well as the potential of high technology to transform the lives of the poor.

Some, like Chandrababu Naidu, the chief minister of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, whose capital is this bustling city, have an almost messianic faith in technology. Though fewer than one-half of 1 percent of Indian households now have Internet access compared with more than a third in America, the optimists believe that technology is coming that will make connecting to the New cheap enough for a broader spectrum of Indians to afford.

"If a television in a school is connected to the Internet, you can hold literacy classes in the evenings," said Randeep Sudan, who oversees information technology for Mr. Naidu. "You can deliver the best of content to the worst of schools. Imagine the potential to revolutionize the educational process."

But others worry that the boom may be distracting the country from its chronic problems and fear that the last decade's more rapid economic growth—spawned by India's loosening of restrictions on trade and investment—is leaving the poor, and the poorer states, further behind, even as the size of India's middle class has doubled.

This is still a country where half the women and a quarter of the men cannot read or write; where more than half the children 4 and under are stunted by malnutrition; where one-third of the population, or more than 300 million people, live in absolute poverty, unable to afford enough to eat; where more than 30 million children 6 to 10 are not in school.

K.R. Narayanan, India's first president from an untouchable caste, sounded this alarm in a recent speech.

"We have one of the world's largest reservoirs of technical personnel, but also the world's largest number of illiterates," he said, "the world's largest middle class, but also the largest number of people below the poverty line, and the largest number of children suffering from malnutrition. Our giant factories rise from out of squalor. Our satellites shoot up from the midst of hovels of the poor."

Even those who believe that the importance of the $5 billion software industry is overblown acknowledge its contributions. It has generated 280,000 jobs for the educated and highly skilled. Those workers, in turn, are creating demand for housing, refrigerators and other goods that help the economy grow.

And there is potential for greater growth. A study by McKinsey & Company, the management consulting firm, forecasts that India's software industry could earn $87 billion and employ 2.2 million people before the decade is done.

The success of the industry has also stirred optimism about India's ability to compete in a global economy. It has offered capitalist, free market models in a country where government still plays a central role and has hastened the tendency of the country's best and brightest young people to choose careers in business rather than the civil service.

"Every country needs a major success story to lift the psyche and to be seen as a powerhouse in something," said Krishna G. Palepu, a Harvard Business School professor who is bullish on the industry. "This is India's chance. Suddenly, there's a sense of self-confidence and visibility internationally."

But there are also limitations on what high technology can do to increase the productivity of the entire Indian economy, at least for now. The industry itself still generates only about 1 percent of India's gross domestic product and about 1 percent of worldwide software exports.

The country desperately needs to attend to the fundamentals, most economists say, and some state leaders like Mr. Naidu concur. It must invest more in primary education and health care, build a working system of roads and power grids, reduce subsidies for power and fertilizer that go mostly to the better-off and generate higher rates of growth in agriculture and industry, which employ 8 in 10 Indians.

India has lagged behind China, for instance, in educating its children and increasing its exports of textiles, shoes and toys—industries that employ huge numbers of less educated workers in China. By law, India has required those industries to remain small, typically employing fewer than 100 people per workplace—putting them at a tremendous disadvantage with China, where such factories employ thousands.

In the garment trade, India and China started out in 1980 with about the same level of exports, but by 1996, India was selling $4.6 billion of its goods abroad, compared with China's $25 billion.

The Indian government is in dire need of revenues to tackle its daunting ills, but so far the software industry is contributing relatively little to the country's public coffers.

Income from software exports is generally exempted from the 38.5 percent corporate income tax. And unlike companies in other industries, high technology companies do not have to pay the 40 percent to 60 percent customs duties on computers and other technology items they import to operate their businesses.

''The software industry is making gobs and gobs of profits,'' said Anil Garg, an Indian and a Silicon Valley entrepreneur who is setting up an office for Aristasoft, the new company he helped found, in Cyber Towers. ''And yet there is this huge debate about whether it should pay taxes. I don't understand. Having taxes is a good problem. The roads here are broken, for God's sake. The schools are so bad. We have been the privileged class for so long. It's time for us to pay back.''

The software technology park of Hitec City and the village of Sheri Ram Reddy Guda are separated by only a short distance, yet seem to come from different centuries, and to stand at opposite poles, emblems of the new and the old India.

Hitec City is a temple to modernity, with a soaring atrium, gargling fountains, an on-site A.T.M., basement car parking and Internet connections for all. The government has created an island where everything works. There are three separate power systems, ensuring that the lights will never go out. And the businesses do not need decent roads; they can deliver their products via satellite links or fiber-optic cables.

Sheri Ram Reddy Guda, population 400, seems ancient by comparison. No one here owns a car or even a scooter. The ox cart is still the primary means of transportation and word of mouth the main grapevine. There is no health clinic, no cable television. Raggedy children who should be in school play in the dirt with toys made from twisted wire.

The village is connected to the main blacktop highway by a narrow, mile-and-a-half-long dirt road, deeply gouged with ruts, that is nearly impassable in the rainy season.

Most of the villages are from the formerly untouchable castes now known as Dalits, and they are grateful to Mr. Naidu's government for building 23 houses for them. But they say they desperately need a better road, reliable electricity and jobs.

The village gets only about eight hours of power a day, and that is often of such low voltage that it does not operate the irrigation pumps. When rain is scare, as it is now, the fields lie parched and work is scarce.

''Chandrababu has not given us the current,'' said an old man, Baswapuram Yelleah, referring to the chief minister and waving his handmade hatchet as he gestured angrily with his hands. ''Our eyes are filled with tears when we see our fields.''

Yarrea Balamani is a widowed mother of five children, 7 to 18. She and her older children do farm work but lately there have been no more than 10 days of work in a month. ''If there was some industry around, we could get work every day,'' she said. ''That would be better for us. It's a very difficult life we are living.''●

SANDIA LABORATORY INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL CONFERENCE

● Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, this week marks the tenth anniversary of the International Arms Control Conference hosted by Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I extend my congratulations to Dr. Paul Robinson, Director of Sandia Laboratory for his support for this unique international conference that draws hundreds of technical and policy experts from all over the world each year.

It is particularly important at this time in history to recognize this Conference here in the Senate. The conclusion of the Cold War has offered the United States and the nations of the world an historic opportunity to increase security in the international system through seeking cooperative measures that would establish international standards of behavior useful for improving global security. When the Senate voted to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997, I am pleased to say, this nation acted in a committed and positive way to capitalize on the opportunity we have been afforded.

Events in the past two years, however, have brought America to a crossroads with respect to the future of arms control. The Senate recently voted to reject the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a treaty signed by 155 countries, that would have established an international standard permanently banning the testing of nuclear weapons in order to combat the spread of nuclear weapons. I deeply regret that vote by the Senate, Mr. President, and am committed to find a way to achieve the goal for which that treaty was negotiated.

Meanwhile, the Russian Duma continues its on again off again consideration of the START II Treaty to reduce the number of strategic weapons in our respective arsenals of nuclear weapons. To date, they have taken no action. Each time a vote in the Duma approaches, an event occurs that postpones its consideration of this important treaty that would reduce the nuclear threat between Russia and the United States and, indeed, to the world as a whole.

Many Russian officials have observed that no further progress in reducing nuclear arsenals is possible if the United States chooses to abrogate the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty which restricts the ability of the United States and Russia to deploy national missile defense systems. Many experts and public officials in the U.S., however, have concluded that the missile threat from rogue governments is sufficiently real that the U.S. should move forward on deploying a missile defense regardless of its impact on strategic relations between Russia and the United States. The President, however, in signing the National Missile Defense Act, indicated that before deciding to deploy a national missile defense system, he would assess the potential impact of such a decision on arms control regimes that support our national security. The nation awaits a decision that could occur this summer.

While this critical decision lies ahead, U.S. negotiators have been meeting with their Russian counterparts to explore a potential agreement that could permit the U.S. to modify the ABM Treaty in a way that would not threaten the strategic balance between the two countries. The outcome of those negotiations is far from certain. The issues that are involved are complex, and extend beyond the dyadic relations between the United States and Russia. Other nuclear powers, notably China, are watching those negotiations very closely to determine appropriate policy directions regarding their own nuclear strategy and arsenal.

As the U.S. and Russia examine the thorny, complex issues involving the relationship between offensive and defensive strategic arms, and nations of the world consider the Senate's vote against the CTBT, the world nevertheless remains committed to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons through the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That Treaty, ratified by 187 countries, recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. In 1995, the states parties to that treaty voted to extend its provisions indefinitely. Later this month, the Sixth Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference will take place in New York. Given the events in South Asia during the past year, and the vote on CTBT in the Senate this winter, the Review Conference will be a very important convocation at which all states parties, including the U.S., will be called on to reaffirm their commitment to the provisions of the NPT.

Given these current conditions in the international environment, it is indeed timely and vital that efforts such as the International Arms Control Conference hosted by Sandia Laboratory take place. The meetings and dialogues that occur at this Conference have provided important understanding among the international community on major arms control issues and I am confident will continue to do so as long as the world seeks to improve security through cooperation.

I salute Sandia, and in particular, Dr. Jim Brown, who founded the Conference ten years ago and has faithfully served as its organizer and driving force during the past decade. If the nations of the world will be able to build upon cooperative understandings reached through arms control agreements, it will be because of the efforts of people such as Dr. Brown, who has devoted a career toward that goal. I extend my best wishes to conference participants and urge them to work hard to build a safer tomorrow for all of us.●

ALLAN LAW

● Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I rise to talk about a truly extraordinary Minnesotan.

Allan Law has been doing extraordinary work in Minnesota for a very long time. For more than 30 years he was a public school teacher—which merits mention in its own right.

But his work did not stop at the end of the school day. He also is the founder of Minneapolis Recreation Development, Inc., a non-profit organization, which has been providing constructive recreational activities for our urban youth. This after-school and weekend program was developed more than 30 years ago and has been reaching yearly, on average, 400 of our hardest to reach young people.

During that period, Allan has spent untold hours meeting the needs of our inner-city youth. Day-in, day-out Allan Law wakes up and works to make the Twin Cities a better place and the young people living there stronger and healthier. He provides us with a model of what an individual, committed to improving a community, can do.

Allan is an inspiration who has been inspiring people for more than a generation. It is my hope and prayer that he will continue his good work for another 30 years.

I rise, as schools begin adjourning for the year, to pay tribute to Allan and his incredible work in making Minneapolis a better place—one young person at a time.●

NORTH EAST WISCONSIN FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL

● Mr. KOHL. Madam President, I rise to recognize the contribution of the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council, which provides fair housing enforcement services in the Fox Valley in Northeastern Wisconsin. I applaud the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council's fight to end housing discrimination. It is not only wrong, intolerable and unjust, it's illegal. While we would like to think that housing discrimination is a thing of the past, it still happens. And while we would like to think that in this day and age, equal housing opportunities are available to everyone, too many people are still shut out of the right to live in a home of their choosing. The more frequently citizens are reminded of their rights, the more likely they are to seek justice.

The North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council's greatest accomplishment has been an ongoing enforcement program. As of March 1, there have been 906 fair housing complaints filed with the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council. Every year since 1992 there has been a major pattern and practice study conducted by the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council. Through national competition, the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council has been the primary contractor on three Fair Housing Initiative Program grants.

The North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council has been at the forefront of innovative ways to combat illegal housing discrimination. In 1997 the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council received a Fair Housing Initiative Program Grant which provided the financial resources to increase attention to complaints from four targeted populations: Hmong, Native Americans, Hispanics and persons with disabilities. The North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council developed an Enforcement Network Program with eight advocacy agencies representing those groups. The goals were to develop better communication with the agencies so they would understand how fair housing issues impacted their agencies and clients. Relationships with the agencies were enhanced and more efficient services were provided to the clients.

Fair Housing is a right for all Americans, and I commend the North East Wisconsin Fair Housing Council for their efforts.●

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

H.R. 3090. A bill to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to restore certain lands to the Elim Native Corporation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 106–258).

By Mr. THOMPSON, from the Committee on Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1993. A bill to reform Government information security by strengthening information security practices throughout the Federal Government (Rept. No. 106–259).

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 183

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize certain disabled former prisoners-of-war to use Department of Defense commissary and exchange stores.

S. 664

At the request of Mr. BREAUX, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 664, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit against income tax to individuals who rehabilitate historic homes or who are the first purchasers of rehabilitated historic homes for use as a principal residence.

S. 708

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 708, a bill to improve the administrative efficiency and effectiveness of the Nation's abuse and neglect courts and the quality and availability of training for judges, attorneys, and volunteers working in such courts, and for other purposes consistent with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.

S. 821

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 821, a bill to provide for the collection of data on traffic stops.

S. 1487

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1487, a bill to provide for excellence in economic education, and for other purposes.

S. 2018

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise the update factor used in making payments to PPS hospitals under the Medicare Program.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to prohibit high school and college sports gambling in all States including States where such gambling was permitted prior to 1991.

S. 2181

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2181, a bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to provide full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and to provide dedicated funding for other conservation programs, including coastal stewardship, wildlife habitat protection, State and local park and open space preservation, historic preservation, forestry conservation programs, and youth conservation corps; and for other purposes.

S. 2255

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. ABRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2255, a bill to amend the Internet Tax Freedom Act to extend the moratorium through calendar year 2006.

S. 2271

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2271, a bill to amend the Social Security Act to improve the quality and availability of training for judges, attorneys, and volunteers working in the Nation's abuse and neglect courts, and for other purposes consistent with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.

S. 2272

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2272, a bill to improve the administrative efficiency and effectiveness of the Nation's abuse and neglect courts and for other purposes consistent with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.

S. 2299

At the request of Mr. L. CHAFEE, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2299, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to continue State Medicaid disproportionate share hospital (DSH) allotments for fiscal year 2001 at the levels for fiscal year 2000.

S. 2308

At the request of Mr. MOYNIHAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2308, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to assure preservation of safety net hospitals through maintenance of the Medicaid disproportionate share hospital program.

S. 2323

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. GRAMM), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2323, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to clarify the treatment of stock options under the Act.

S. 2365

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2365, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate the 15 percent reduction in payment rates under the prospective payment system for home health services.

S. CON. RES. 98

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 98, a concurrent resolution urging compliance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

AMENDMENT NO. 3018

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3018 proposed to S. Con. Res. 101, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 2001 through 2005 and revising the budgetary levels for fiscal year 2000.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

LEGISLATION INSTITUTING A FEDERAL FUELS TAX HOLIDAY

GRAHAM AMENDMENT NO. 3083

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. GRAHAM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill (S. 2285) instituting a Federal fuels tax holiday; as follows:

At the end add the following:

SEC. ___. DELAY IN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) The social security program is the foundation upon which millions of Americans rely for income during retirement or in the event of disability.

(2) For nearly two-thirds of seniors living alone, social security comprises 50 percent or more of their total income.

(3) The medicare program provides essential medical care for tens of millions of older and disabled Americans.

(4) During the 35-year history of the program, medicare has helped lift elderly Americans out of poverty and has improved and extended their lives.

(5) According to the 2000 annual report of the Board of Trustees of the social security trust funds—

(A) beginning in 2016, payroll tax revenue will fall short of the amount needed to pay current benefits, necessitating the use of interest earned on trust fund assets and then the eventual redemption of those assets; and

(B) assets of the combined retirement and disability trust funds will be exhausted in 2037.

(6) According to the 2000 annual report of the Board of Trustees of the social security trust funds, assets in the medicare health insurance trust fund will be exhausted in 2023.

(7) The Congressional Budget Office has prepared 3 estimates of the non-social security surplus for the next 10 years which range in size from $838,000,000,000 to $1,918,000,000,000.

(8) The presence of non-social security surpluses present Congress with the opportunity to address the long-term funding shortfall facing the social security and medicare programs.

(b) DELAY IN EFFECTIVE DATE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of, or amendment made by, this Act, no such provision or amendment shall take effect until legislation has been enacted that extends the solvency of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund under section 201 of the Social Security Act through 2075 and the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund under part A of title XVIII of such Act through 2025.

LOTT AMENDMENTS NOS. 3084–3085

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. LOTT submitted two amendments intended to be proposed by him to the bill, S. 2285, supra; as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3084

Strike all after the first word and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Fuels Tax Holiday Act of 2000''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY REDUCTION IN FUEL TAXES ON GASOLINE, DIESEL FUEL, KEROSENE, AVIATION FUEL, AND SPECIAL FUELS, BY 4.3 CENTS, OR TO ZERO.

(a) TEMPORARY REDUCTION IN FUEL TAXES.—During the applicable period, each rate of tax referred to in subsection (b)—

(1) shall be reduced by 4.3 cents per gallon, and

(2) if at any time during the applicable period the national average price of unleaded regular gasoline is at least $2.00 per gallon (as determined on a weekly basis by the Secretary of Energy), shall be suspended beginning on the date which is 7 days after the announcement described in subsection (d) and for the remainder of the applicable period, subject to subsection (e).

(b) RATES OF TAX.—The rates of tax referred to in this subsection are the rates of tax otherwise applicable under—

(1) paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of section 4041(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to special fuels),

(2) subsection (m) of section 4041 of such Code (relating to certain alcohol fuels),

(3)(A) in the case of the reduction under subsection (a)(1), subparagraph (C) of section 4042(b)(1) of such Code (relating to tax on fuel used in commercial transportation on inland waterways), and

(B) in the case of the suspension under subsection (a)(2), subparagraphs (A) and (C) of such section 4042(b)(1),

(4) clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of section 4081(a)(2)(A) of such Code (relating to gasoline, diesel fuel, and kerosene),

(5) paragraph (1) of section 4091(b) of such Code (relating to aviation fuel), and

(6) paragraph (2) of section 4092(b) of such Code (relating to fuel used in commercial aviation).

(c) SPECIAL REDUCTION RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of subsection (a) shall be applied by substituting for ''4.3 cents''—

(A) ''3.2 cents'' in the case of fuel described in section 4041(a)(2)(B)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to liquefied petroleum),

(B) ''2.8 cents'' in the case of fuel described in section 4041(a)(2)(B)(iii) of such Code (relating to liquefied natural gas),

(C) ''48.54 cents'' in the case of fuel described in section 4041(a)(3)(A) of such Code (relating to compressed natural gas), and

(D) ''2.15 cents'' in the case of fuel described in section 4041(m)(1)(A)(ii)(I) of such Code (relating to certain alcohol fuel).

(2) CONFORMING RULES.—

(A) In the case of a reduction under subsection (a)(1)—

(i) section 4081(c) of such Code shall be applied without regard to paragraph (6) thereof,

(ii) section 4091(c) of such Code shall be applied without regard to paragraph (4) thereof,

(iii) section 6421(f)(2) of such Code shall be applied by disregarding ''and, in the case'' and all that follows,

(iv) section 6421(f)(3) of such Code shall be applied without regard to subparagraph (B) thereof,

(v) section 6427(l)(3) of such Code shall be applied without regard to subparagraph (B) thereof, and

(vi) section 6427(l)(4) of such Code shall be applied without regard to subparagraph (B) thereof.

(B) In the case of a suspension under subsection (a)(2)—

(i) section 40(e)(1) of such Code shall be applied without regard to subparagraph (B) thereof,

(ii) section 4041(d)(1) of such Code shall be applied by disregarding ''if tax is imposed by subsection (a)(1) or (2) on such sale or use'', and

(iii) section 6427(b) of such Code shall be applied without regard to paragraph (2) thereof.

(d) ANNOUNCEMENT BY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—Within 2 days of the determination by the Secretary of Energy described in subsection (a)(2), the Secretary of the Treasury shall announce the suspension described in such subsection or the modification described in subsection (e).

(e) PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS.—If upon the determination described in subsection (a)(2), the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and based on the most recent available estimate of the Federal on-budget surplus for fiscal years 2000 and 2001, determines that the suspension described in subsection (a)(2) when added to the reduction described in subsection (a)(1) would result in an aggregate reduction in revenues to the Treasury exceeding such surplus during the remainder of the applicable period, the Secretary shall modify such suspension such that each rate of tax referred to in subsection (b) is reduced in a pro rata manner and such aggregate reduction does not exceed such surplus.

(f) MAINTENANCE OF TRUST FUNDS DEPOSITS.—On April 16, 2000, and, if necessary, on the date described in subsection (a)(2), the Secretary of the Treasury shall determine the amount any Federal trust fund would have received in gross receipts during the applicable period had this section not been enacted. Such amount shall be appropriated and transferred from the general fund to the applicable trust fund in the manner in which such gross receipts would have been transferred by the Secretary of the Treasury and such amount shall be treated as taxes received in the Treasury under the applicable section of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 described in subsection (b).

(g) APPLICABLE PERIOD.—For purposes of this section, the term ''applicable period'' means the period beginning after April 15, 2000, and ending before January 1, 2001.

SEC. 3. FLOOR STOCKS CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If—

(1) before a tax reduction date, a tax referred to in section 2(b) has been imposed on any liquid, and

(2) on such date such liquid is held by a dealer and has not been used and is intended for sale,

there shall be credited (without interest) to the person who paid such tax (hereafter in this section referred to as the ''taxpayer''), against the taxpayer's subsequent semimonthly deposit of such tax, an amount equal to the excess of the tax paid by the taxpayer over the amount of such tax which would be imposed on such liquid had the taxable event occurred on the tax reduction date.

(b) CERTIFICATION NECESSARY TO FILE CLAIM FOR CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In any case where liquid is held by a dealer (other than the taxpayer) on the tax reduction date, no credit amount with respect to such liquid shall be allowed to the taxpayer under subsection (a) unless the taxpayer files with the Secretary—

(A) a certification that the taxpayer has given a credit to such dealer with respect to such liquid against the dealer's first purchase of liquid from the taxpayer subsequent to the tax reduction date, and

(B) a certification by such dealer that such dealer has given a credit to a succeeding dealer (if any) with respect to such liquid against the succeeding dealer's first purchase of liquid from such dealer subsequent to the tax reduction date.

(2) REASONABLENESS OF CLAIMS CERTIFIED.—Any certification made under paragraph (1) shall include an additional certification that the claim for credit was reasonable based on the taxpayer's or dealer's past business relationship with the succeeding dealer.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

(1) the terms ''dealer'' and ''held by a dealer'' have the respective meanings given to such terms by section 6412 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; except that the term ''dealer'' includes a position holder, and

(2) the term ''tax reduction date'' means April 16, 2000, or the date described in section 2(a)(2).

(d) CERTAIN RULES TO APPLY.—Rules similar to the rules of subsections (b) and (c) of section 6412 of such Code shall apply for purposes of this section.

SEC. 4. FLOOR STOCKS TAX.

(a) IMPOSITION OF TAX.—In the case of any liquid on which a tax referred to in section 2(b) would have been imposed during the applicable period but for the enactment of this Act, and which is held on the floor stocks tax date by any person, there is hereby imposed a floor stocks tax in an amount equal to the excess of—

(1) the tax referred to in section 2(b) which would be imposed on such liquid had the taxable event occurred on the floor stocks tax date, over

(2) the amount of such tax previously paid (if any) with respect to such liquid.

(b) LIABILITY FOR TAX AND METHOD OF PAYMENT.—

(1) LIABILITY FOR TAX.—A person holding a liquid on the floor stocks tax date to which the tax imposed by subsection (a) applies shall be liable for such tax.

(2) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—The tax imposed by subsection (a) shall be paid in such manner as the Secretary shall prescribe.

(3) TIME FOR PAYMENT.—The tax imposed by subsection (a) shall be paid on or before the date which is 45 days after the floor stocks tax date.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

(1) HELD BY A PERSON.—A liquid shall be considered as ''held by a person'' if title thereto has passed to such person (whether or not delivery to the person has been made).

(2) FLOOR STOCKS TAX DATE.—The term ''floor stocks tax date'' means January 1, 2001.

(3) APPLICABLE PERIOD.—The term ''applicable period'' means the period beginning after April 15, 2000, and ending before January 1, 2001.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate.

(d) EXCEPTION FOR EXEMPT USES.—The tax imposed by subsection (a) shall not apply to any liquid held by any person exclusively for any use to the extent a credit or refund of the tax referred to in section 2(b) is allowable for such use.

(e) EXCEPTION FOR FUEL HELD IN VEHICLE TANK.—No tax shall be imposed by subsection (a) on any liquid held in the tank of a motor vehicle, motorboat, vessel, or aircraft.

(f) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN AMOUNTS OF FUEL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No tax shall be imposed by subsection (a) on any liquid held on the floor stocks tax date by any person if the aggregate amount of such liquid held by such person on such date does not exceed 2,000 gallons. The preceding sentence shall apply only if such person submits to the Secretary (at the time and in the manner required by the Secretary) such information as the Secretary shall require for purposes of this paragraph.

(2) EXEMPT FUEL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), there shall not be taken into account any liquid held by any person which is exempt from the tax imposed by subsection (a) by reason of subsection (d) or (e).

(3) CONTROLLED GROUPS.—For purposes of this subsection—

(A) CORPORATIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—All persons treated as a controlled group shall be treated as 1 person.

(ii) CONTROLLED GROUP.—The term ''controlled group'' has the meaning given to such term by subsection (a) of section 1563 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; except that for such purposes the phrase ''more than 50 percent'' shall be substituted for the phrase ''at least 80 percent'' each place it appears in such subsection.

(B) NONINCORPORATED PERSONS UNDER COMMON CONTROL.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, principles similar to the principles of subparagraph (A) shall apply to a group of persons under common control if 1 or more of such persons is not a corporation.

(g) OTHER LAW APPLICABLE.—All provisions of law, including penalties, applicable with respect to the taxes imposed by chapter 31 or 32 of such Code shall, insofar as applicable and not inconsistent with the provisions of this section, apply with respect to the floor stock taxes imposed by subsection (a) to the same extent as if such taxes were imposed by such chapter.

SEC. 5. BENEFITS OF TAX REDUCTION SHOULD BE PASSED ON TO CONSUMERS.

(a) PASSTHROUGH TO CONSUMERS.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) consumers immediately receive the benefit of the reduction in taxes under this Act, and

(B) transportation motor fuels producers and other dealers take such actions as necessary to reduce transportation motor fuels prices to reflect such reduction, including immediate credits to customer accounts representing tax refunds allowed as credits against excise tax deposit payments under the floor stocks refund provisions of this Act.

(2) STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the reduction of taxes under this Act to determine whether there has been a passthrough of such reduction.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than September 30, 2000, the Comptroller General of the United States shall report to the Committee on Finance of the Senate and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).

AMENDMENT NO. 3085

On page 2, strike lines 7 and 8.

BURNS AMENDMENT NO. 3086

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. BURNS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill, S. 2285, supra; as follows:

Strike all after the first word, and insert:

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF 4.3-CENT AVIATION FUEL EXCISE TAXES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4091(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to rate of tax) is amended by striking ''21.8 cents'' and inserting ''17.5 cents''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 4091(b)(3)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(A) The rate of tax specified in paragraph (1) shall be zero after September 30, 2007.''.

(2) Section 4091(c)(1) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking ''13.4 cents'' both places it appears and inserting ''9.1 cents'', and

(B) by striking ''14 cents'' and inserting ''9.7 cents''.

(3) Section 4091(c) of such Code is amended by striking paragraph (4) and by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4).

(4) Section 4092(b)(2) of such Code is amended by inserting ''and before the date of the enactment of the ____ Act,'' after ''1995,''.

(5) Section 4081(a)(2)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''19.3 cents'' and inserting ''15 cents''.

(6) Section 4081(d)(2) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

''(2) AVIATION GASOLINE.—The rate of tax specified in subsection (a)(2)(A)(ii) shall be zero after September 30, 2007.''.

(7) Section 4041(c)(3) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

''(3) TERMINATION.—The rate of the taxes imposed by paragraph (1) shall be zero after September 30, 2007.''.

(8) Section 6421(f)(2)(B) of such Code is amended by striking ''financing rate'' and all that follows and inserting ''financing rate.''.

(9) Section 6427(l)(4)(B) of such Code is amended by inserting ''and before the date of the enactment of the ____ Act,'' after ''1995,''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

TORRICELLI AMENDMENT NO. 3087

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. TORRICELLI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill, S. 2285, supra; as follows:

At the end add the following:

SEC. ___. MODIFICATIONS TO DISASTER CASUALTY LOSS DEDUCTION.

(a) LOWER ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME THRESHOLD.—Paragraph (2) of section 165(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to treatment of casualty gains and losses) is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If the personal casualty losses for any taxable year exceed the personal casualty gains for such taxable year, such losses shall be allowed for the taxable year only to the extent of the sum of—

''(i) the amount of the personal casualty gains for the taxable year, plus

''(ii) so much of such excess attributable to losses described in subsection (i) as exceeds 5 percent of the adjusted gross income of the individual (determined without regard to any deduction allowable under subsection (c)(3))'', plus

''(iii) so much of such excess attributable to losses not described in subsection (i) as exceeds 10 percent of the adjusted gross income of the individual.

For purposes of this subparagraph, personal casualty losses attributable to losses not described in subsection (i) shall be considered before such losses attributable to losses described in subsection (i).'', and

(2) by striking ''10 PERCENT'' in the heading and inserting ''PERCENTAGE''.

(b) ABOVE-THE-LINE DEDUCTION.—Section 62(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (defining adjusted gross income) is amended by inserting after paragraph (17) the following:

''(18) CERTAIN DISASTER LOSSES.—The deduction allowed by section 165(c)(3) to the extent attributable to losses described in section 165(i).''

(c) ELECTION TO TAKE DISASTER LOSS DEDUCTION FOR PRECEDING OR SUCCEEDING 2 YEARS.—Paragraph (1) of section 165(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to disaster losses) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''or succeeding'' after ''preceding'', and

(2) by inserting ''OR SUCCEEDING'' after ''PRECEDING'' in the heading.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to losses sustained in taxable years beginning after December 31, 1998.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will take place on Wednesday, April 26, 2000, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 2273, to establish the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area, and for other purposes; and S. 2048 and H.R. 3605, to establish the San Rafael Western Legacy District in the State of Utah, and for other purposes.

Those who wish to submit written statement should write to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. For further information, please call Mike Menge or Bill Eby at (202) 224–6170.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet on April 10, 2000, from 1 p.m.–4 p.m. in Dirksen 106 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FISCAL YEAR 2001 BUDGET—H. CON. RES. 290

On April 7, 2000, the Senate amended and passed H. Con. Res. 290, as follows:

Resolved, That the resolution from the House of Representatives (H. Con. Res. 290) entitled ''Concurrent resolution establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2001, revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2005.'', do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert:

SECTION 1. CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001.

(a) DECLARATION.—Congress determines and declares that this resolution is the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2001 including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 as authorized by section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the revised budgetary levels for fiscal year 2000 as authorized by section 304 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this concurrent resolution is as follows:

TITLE I—LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

SEC. 101. RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS.

The following budgetary levels are the revised levels for fiscal year 2000 and the appropriate levels for the fiscal years 2001 through 2005:

(1) FEDERAL REVENUES.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution—

(A) The recommended levels of Federal revenues are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $1,464,604,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $1,501,903,341,000.
Fiscal year 2002: $1,547,229,399,000.
Fiscal year 2003: $1,599,474,925,000.
Fiscal year 2004: $1,655,748,225,000.
Fiscal year 2005: $1,721,310,999,999.

(B) The amounts by which the aggregate levels of Federal revenues should be changed are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: −$877,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001: −$12,911,658,996.
Fiscal year 2002: −$24,157,600,996.
Fiscal year 2003: −$30,048,074,996.
Fiscal year 2004: −$36,894,774,996
Fiscal year 2005: −$42,790,999,997.

(2) NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total new budget authority are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $1,467,259,500,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $1,478,583,890,003.
Fiscal year 2002: $1,503,416,000,003.
Fiscal year 2003: $1,614,843,200,003.
Fiscal year 2004: $1,670,986,800,003.
Fiscal year 2005: $1,731,182,000,003.

(3) BUDGET OUTLAYS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution and the revised fiscal year 2000 resolution, the appropriate levels of total budget outlays are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $1,441,461,500,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $1,451,702,341,003.
Fiscal year 2002: $1,470,727,399,003.
Fiscal year 2003: $1,590,481,125,003.
Fiscal year 2004: $1,644,813,025,003.
Fiscal year 2005: $1,706,375,000,003.

(4) DEFICITS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the amounts of the deficits are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $23,147,500,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $53,473,000,001.
Fiscal year 2002: $76,577,000,001.
Fiscal year 2003: $9,076,200,001.
Fiscal year 2004: $10,975,800,001.
Fiscal year 2005: $14,958,000,001.

(5) PUBLIC DEBT.—The appropriate levels of the public debt are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $5,625,962,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $5,667,144,000,001.
Fiscal year 2002: $5,681,983,000,001.
Fiscal year 2003: $5,768,762,000,001.
Fiscal year 2004: $5,849,465,000,001.
Fiscal year 2005: $5,923,674,000,001.

(6) DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC.—The appropriate levels of the debt held by the public are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $3,455,362,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $3,248,659,000,001.
Fiscal year 2002: $2,995,663,000,001.
Fiscal year 2003: $2,802,939,000,001.
Fiscal year 2004: $2,594,260,000,001.
Fiscal year 2005: $2,364,124,000,001.

SEC. 102. SOCIAL SECURITY.

(a) SOCIAL SECURITY REVENUES.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the amounts of revenues of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $479,648,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $501,533,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002: $524,854,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003: $547,179,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004: $569,907,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005: $597,326,000,000.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY OUTLAYS.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the amounts of outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000: $322,545,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001: $331,869,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002: $339,068,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003: $347,733,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004: $357,737,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005: $368,976,000,000.

(c) SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $3,160,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,187,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $3,429,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,378,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $3,471,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,438,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $3,505,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,473,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $3,541,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,507,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $3,576,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,543,000,000.

SEC. 103. MAJOR FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES.

Congress determines and declares that the appropriate levels of new budget authority, budget outlays, new direct loan obligations, and new primary loan guarantee commitments for fiscal year 2000 (as revised) and fiscal years 2001 through 2005 for each major functional category are:

(1) National Defense (050):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $291,585,500,000.
(B) Outlays, $288,114,500,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $309,843,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $296,074,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $309,091,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $302,278,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $315,489,200,000.
(B) Outlays, $309,366,200,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $323,193,800,000.
(B) Outlays, $317,463,800,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $331,534,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $327,950,000,000.

(2) International Affairs (150):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $21,967,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $16,019,000,000.

Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $20,139,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $18,625,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $20,868,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,932,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $21,420,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,573,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $21,907,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,741,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $22,645,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,892,000,000.
(3) General Science, Space, and Technology (250):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $19,267,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $18,418,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $19,703,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,245,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $19,877,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,593,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $19,806,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,515,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $20,069,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,655,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $20,337,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,900,000,000.
(4) Energy (270):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $1,081,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$607,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $1,475,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $172,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, −$264,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,366,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $1,202,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$43,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $1,238,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$124,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $1,210,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$85,000,000.
(5) Natural Resources and Environment (300):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $24,487,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $24,245,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $24,936,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $24,905,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $25,023,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $25,045,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $25,019,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $25,203,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $25,066,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $25,065,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $25,059,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $24,876,000,000.
(6) Agriculture (350):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $35,257,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $33,916,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $20,894,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $18,779,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $18,950,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,235,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $17,965,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $16,366,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $17,354,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $15,910,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $16,092,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $14,593,000,000.
(7) Commerce and Housing Credit (370):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $7,594,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $3,141,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $6,117,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $1,977,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $8,608,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $4,864,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $9,356,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $4,677,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $13,413,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $8,391,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $13,368,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $9,331,000,000.
(8) Transportation (400):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $54,352,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $46,656,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $59,247,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $50,822,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $57,536,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $53,486,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $59,101,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $55,516,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $59,135,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $56,138,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $59,174,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $56,418,000,000.
(9) Community and Regional Development (450):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $11,336,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $10,725,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $9,271,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $10,438,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $8,822,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $9,878,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $8,665,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $8,823,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $8,657,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $8,290,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $8,744,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $7,904,000,000.
(10) Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $57,688,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $61,904,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $75,600,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $68,772,000,001.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $76,377,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $73,182,000,001.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $77,280,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $76,065,000,001.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $78,406,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $77,412,000,001.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $79,794,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $78,690,000,001.
(11) Health (550):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $159,224,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $153,473,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $170,815,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $167,436,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $178,911,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $177,766,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $190,951,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $190,300,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $205,181,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $204,835,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $221,484,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $220,329,000,000.
(12) Medicare (570):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $199,601,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $199,507,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $218,751,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $219,005,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $228,635,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $228,604,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $249,762,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $249,520,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $265,318,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $265,546,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $288,730,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $288,681,000,000.
(13) Income Security (600):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $238,891,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $248,071,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $253,236,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $255,424,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $264,844,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $267,252,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $274,789,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $278,452,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $284,929,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $288,367,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $297,669,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $301,202,000,000.
(14) Social Security (650):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $11,532,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $11,533,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $9,728,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $9,727,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $11,572,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $11,572,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $12,271,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $12,271,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $13,020,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,020,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $13,841,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,841,000,000.
(15) Veterans Benefits and Services (700):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $46,010,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $45,130,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $48,568,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $48,071,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $49,323,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $49,189,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $51,338,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $51,010,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $52,619,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $52,340,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $56,017,000,000.

(B) Outlays, $55,692,000,000.
(16) Administration of Justice (750):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $27,370,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $28,013,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $28,210,890,000.
(B) Outlays, $28,345,341,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $28,520,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $28,782,399,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $29,157,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $29,191,925,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $31,283,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $31,021,225,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $32,124,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $31,863,000,000.
(17) General Government (800):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $13,670,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $14,727,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $14,427,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $14,291,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $13,605,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,883,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $13,578,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,768,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $13,570,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,882,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $13,595,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,604,000,000.
(18) Net Interest (900):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, $284,491,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $284,493,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, $286,920,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $286,920,000,001.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, $285,291,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $285,290,000,001.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $279,465,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $279,465,000,001.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $275,502,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $275,502,000,001.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $270,951,000,001.
(B) Outlays, $270,951,000,001.
(19) Allowances (920):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, −$3,829,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$11,702,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, −$62,031,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$50,131,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, −$59,729,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$71,311,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, −$790,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, −$6,770,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, −$6,072,000,000.
(20) Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):
Fiscal year 2000:
(A) New budget authority, −$34,315,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$34,315,000,000.
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, −$38,366,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$38,366,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, −$41,943,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$41,943,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, −$41,270,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$41,270,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, −$38,374,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$38,374,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, −$40,686,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$40,686,000,000.

SEC. 104. RECONCILIATION OF REVENUE REDUCTIONS IN THE SENATE.

Not later than September 22, 2000, the Senate Committee on Finance shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill proposing changes in laws within its jurisdiction necessary to reduce revenues by not more than $12,911,658,999 in fiscal year 2001 and $146,803,109,999 for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

SEC. 105. APPROPRIATE LEVELS FOR FUNCTION 920.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution the appropriate levels for function 920 are as follows:
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, −$60,431,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$48,461,000,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, −$60,229,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$71,796,000,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, −$500,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$5,287,000,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, −$500,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$7,268,000,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, −$500,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$6,570,000,000.

SEC. 106. FURTHER APPROPRIATE LEVELS FOR FUNCTION 920.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, the appropriate levels for function 920 are as follows:
Fiscal year 2001:
(A) New budget authority, −$60,214,890,000.
(B) Outlays, −$48,152,341,000.
Fiscal year 2002:
(A) New budget authority, −$59,729,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$71,395,399,000.
Fiscal year 2003:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, −$858,925,000.
Fiscal year 2004:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, −$6,779,225,000.
Fiscal year 2005:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, −$6,072,000,000.

TITLE II—BUDGETARY RESTRAINTS AND RULEMAKING

SEC. 201. CONGRESSIONAL LOCK BOX FOR SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) under the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, the Social Security trust funds are off-budget for purposes of the President's budget submission and the concurrent resolution on the budget;

(2) the Social Security trust funds have been running surpluses for 18 years;

(3) these surpluses have been used to implicitly finance the general operations of the Federal Government;

(4) in fiscal year 2001, the Social Security surplus will reach $166,000,000,000;

(5) in fiscal year 1999, the Federal budget was balanced without using Social Security;

(6) the only way to ensure that Social Security surpluses are not diverted for other purposes is to balance the budget exclusive of such surpluses; and

(7) Congress and the President should take such steps as are necessary to ensure that future budgets continue to be balanced excluding the surpluses generated by the Social Security trust funds.

(b) POINT OF ORDER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any revision to this concurrent resolution, or any other concurrent resolution on the budget, or any amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that sets forth a deficit for any fiscal year.

(2) DEFICIT LEVELS.—For purposes of this subsection, a deficit shall be the level (if any) set forth in the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget for that fiscal year pursuant to section 301(a)(3) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(c) BUDGET COMMITTEE DETERMINATIONS.—For purposes of this section, the levels of new budget authority, outlays, direct spending, new entitlement authority, revenues, deficits, and surpluses for a fiscal year shall be determined on the basis of estimates made by the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives or the Senate, as applicable.

(d) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (b) shall not apply if—

(1) the most recent of the Department of Commerce's advance, preliminary, or final reports of actual real economic growth indicate that the rate of real economic growth for each of the most recently reported quarter and the immediately preceding quarter is less than 1 percent; or

(2) a declaration of war is in effect.

(e) SOCIAL SECURITY LOOK-BACK.—If in any fiscal year the Social Security surplus is used to finance general operations of the Federal Government, an amount equal to the amount used shall be deducted from the available amount of discretionary spending for the following fiscal year for purposes of any concurrent resolution on the budget.

(f) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—Subsection (b) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

SEC. 202. RESERVE FUND FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

(a) ALLOCATION.—In the Senate, spending aggregates and other appropriate budgetary levels and limits may be adjusted and allocations may be revised for legislation reported by the Committee on Finance to provide a prescription drug benefit for fiscal years 2001, 2002, and 2003, provided that this legislation will not reduce the on-budget surplus by more than $20,000,000,000 total during these 3 fiscal years, and provided that the enactment of this legislation will not cause an on-budget deficit in any of these 3 fiscal years.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The adjustments provided in subsection (a) shall be made for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment that is offered (in the Senate), that provides coverage for prescription drugs, if the Senate Committee on Finance has not reported such legislation on or before September 1, 2000.

(c) ADJUSTMENT.—If legislation is reported by the Senate Committee on Finance that extends the solvency of the Medicare Hospital Insurance Trust Fund without the use of transfers of new subsidies from the general fund, without decreasing beneficiaries' access to health care, and excluding the cost of extending and modifying the prescription drug benefit crafted pursuant to section (a) or (b), then the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may change committee allocations and spending aggregates by no more than $20,000,000,000 total for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 to fund the prescription drug benefit if such legislation will not cause an on-budget deficit in either of these 2 fiscal years.

(d) BUDGETARY ENFORCEMENT.—The revision of allocations and aggregates made under this section shall be considered for the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 as allocations and aggregates contained in this resolution.

SEC. 203. RESERVE FUND FOR STABILIZATION OF PAYMENTS TO COUNTIES IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION.

(a) ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Whenever the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate reports a bill, or an amendment thereto is offered, or a conference report thereon is submitted, that provides additional resources for counties and complies with paragraph (2), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may increase the allocation of budget authority and outlays to that committee by the amount of budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) provided by that legislation for such purpose in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) CONDITION.—Legislation complies with this paragraph if it provides for the stabilization of receipt-based payments to counties that support school and road systems and also provides that a portion of those payments would be dedicated toward local investments in Federal lands within the counties.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—The adjustments to the allocations required by subsection (a) shall not exceed $200,000,000 in budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for fiscal year 2001 and shall not exceed $1,100,000,000 in budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

SEC. 204. RESERVE FUND FOR AGRICULTURE.

(a) ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate reports a bill on or before June 29, 2000, or an amendment thereto is offered, or a conference report thereon is submitted that provides assistance for producers of program crops and specialty crops, and enhancements for agriculture conservation programs that complies with paragraph (2), the appropriate chairman of the Committee on the Budget may increase the allocation of budget authority and outlays to that committee by the amount of budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) provided by that legislation for such purpose in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) CONDITIONS.—Legislation complies with this paragraph if it does not cause a net increase in budget authority and outlays of greater than $1,640,000,000 for fiscal year 2001.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—The adjustments to the allocations required by subsection (a) shall not exceed $5,500,000,000 in budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2000, and $3,000,000,000 in budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

SEC. 205. TAX REDUCTION RESERVE FUND IN THE SENATE.

In the Senate, the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may reduce the spending and revenue aggregates and may revise committee allocations for legislation that reduces revenues if such legislation will not increase the deficit or decrease the surplus for—

(1) fiscal year 2001; or

(2) the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

SEC. 206. MECHANISM FOR ADDITIONAL DEBT REDUCTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If any of the legislation described in subsection (b) does not become law on or before October 1, 2000, then the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate shall adjust the levels in this concurrent resolution as provided in subsection (c).

(b) LEGISLATION.—The adjustment required by subsection (a) shall be made with respect to—

(1) the reconciliation legislation required by section 104; or

(2) the Medicare legislation provided for in section 202.

(c) ADJUSTMENTS TO BE MADE.—The adjustment required in subsection (a) shall be—

(1) with respect to the legislation required by section 104, to decrease the balance displayed on the Senate's pay-as-you-go scorecard and increase the revenue aggregate by the amount set forth in section 104 (as adjusted, if adjusted, pursuant to section 205) and to decrease the level of debt held by the public as set forth in section 101(6) by that same amount; or

(2) with respect to the legislation provided for in section 202, to decrease the balance displayed on the Senate's pay-as-you-go scorecard by the amount set forth in section 202 and to decrease the level of debt held by the public as set forth in section 101(6) by that same amount and make the corresponding adjustments to the revenue and spending aggregates and allocations (as adjusted by section 202).

SEC. 207. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION POINT OF ORDER IN THE SENATE.

(a) DESIGNATIONS.—

(1) GUIDANCE.—In making a designation of a provision of legislation as an emergency requirement under section 251(b)(2)(A) or 252(e) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, the committee report and any statement of managers accompanying that legislation shall analyze whether a proposed emergency requirement meets all the criteria in paragraph (2).

(2) CRITERIA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The criteria to be considered in determining whether a proposed expenditure or tax change is an emergency requirement are—

(i) necessary, essential, or vital (not merely useful or beneficial);

(ii) sudden, quickly coming into being, and not building up over time;

(iii) an urgent, pressing, and compelling need requiring immediate action;

(iv) subject to subparagraph (B), unforeseen, unpredictable, and unanticipated; and

(v) not permanent, temporary in nature.

(B) UNFORESEEN.—An emergency that is part of an aggregate level of anticipated emergencies, particularly when normally estimated in advance, is not unforeseen.

(3) JUSTIFICATION FOR FAILURE TO MEET CRITERIA.—If the proposed emergency requirement does not meet all the criteria set forth in paragraph (2), the committee report or the statement of managers, as the case may be, shall provide a written justification of why the requirement should be accorded emergency status.

(b) POINT OF ORDER.—When the Senate is considering a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report, a point of order may be made by a Senator against an emergency designation in that measure and if the Presiding Officer sustains that point of order, that provision making such a designation shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

(c) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—This section may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

(d) DEFINITION OF AN EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—A provision shall be considered an emergency designation if it designates any item an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) or 252(e) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(e) FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under this section may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(f) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—If a point of order is sustained under this section against a conference report the report shall be disposed of as provided in section 313(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(g) EXCEPTION FOR DEFENSE SPENDING.—Subsection (b) shall not apply against an emergency designation for a provision making discretionary appropriations in the defense category.

SEC. 208. RESERVE FUND PENDING INCREASE OF FISCAL YEAR 2001 DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) The functional totals with respect to discretionary spending set forth in this concurrent resolution, if implemented, would result in legislation which exceeds the limit on discretionary spending for fiscal year 2001 set out in section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. Nonetheless, the allocation pursuant to section 302 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to the Committee on Appropriations is in compliance with current law spending limits.

(2) Consequently unless and until the discretionary spending limit for fiscal year 2001 is increased, aggregate appropriations which exceed the current law limits would still be out of order in the Senate and subject to a supermajority vote.

(3) The functional totals contained in this concurrent resolution envision a level of discretionary spending for fiscal year 2001 as follows:

(A) For the discretionary category: $602,179,000,000 in new budget authority and $593,926,000,000 in outlays.

(B) For the highway category: $26,920,000,000 in outlays.

(C) For the mass transit category: $4,639,000,000 in outlays.

(4) To facilitate the Senate completing its legislative responsibilities for the 106th Congress in a timely fashion, it is imperative that the Senate consider legislation which increases the discretionary spending limit for fiscal year 2001 as soon as possible.

(b) ADJUSTMENT TO ALLOCATIONS.—Whenever a bill or joint resolution becomes law that increases the discretionary spending limit for fiscal year 2001 set out in section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, the appropriate chairman of the Committee on the Budget shall increase the allocation called for in section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to the appropriate Committee on Appropriations.

(c) LIMITATION ON ADJUSTMENT.—An adjustment made pursuant to subsection (b) shall not result in an allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 that exceeds the total budget authority and outlays set forth in subsection (a)(3).

SEC. 209. CONGRESSIONAL FIREWALL FOR DEFENSE AND NONDEFENSE SPENDING.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, for fiscal year 2001 the term ''discretionary spending limit'' means—

(1) for the defense category, $310,819,000,000 in new budget authority and $297,050,000,000 in outlays; and

(2) for the nondefense category, $291,360,000,000 in new budget authority and $329,183,000,000 in outlays.

(b) POINT OF ORDER IN THE SENATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After the adjustment to the section 302(a) allocation to the Appropriations Committee is made pursuant to section 207 and except as provided in paragraph (2), it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that exceeds any discretionary spending limit set forth in this section.

(2) EXCEPTION.—This subsection shall not apply if a declaration of war by Congress is in effect.

(c) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—This section may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

SEC. 210. MECHANISMS FOR STRENGTHENING BUDGETARY INTEGRITY.

(a) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term ''budget year'' means with respect to a

session of Congress, the fiscal year of the Government that starts on October 1 of the calendar year in which that session begins.

(b) POINT OF ORDER WITH RESPECT TO ADVANCED APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, resolution, amendment, motion or conference report that—

(A) provides an appropriation of new budget authority for any fiscal year after the budget year that is in excess of the amounts provided in paragraph (2); and

(B) provides an appropriation of new budget authority for any fiscal year subsequent to the year after the budget year.

(2) LIMITATION ON AMOUNTS.—The total amount, provided in appropriations legislation for the budget year, of appropriations for the subsequent fiscal year shall not exceed $23,000,000,000.

(c) POINT OF ORDER WITH RESPECT TO DELAYED OBLIGATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that contains an appropriation of new budget authority for any fiscal year which does not become available upon enactment of such legislation or on the first day of that fiscal year (whichever is later).

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to appropriations in the defense category; nor shall it apply to appropriations reoccurring or customary or for the following programs: Provided, That such appropriation is not delayed beyond the specified date and does not exceed the specified amount:

(A) DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.—Operation of Indian Programs School Operation Costs (Bureau of Indian Affairs Funded Schools and Other Education Programs): July 1 not to exceed $401,000,000.

(B) DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.—

(i) Training and Employment Service: July 1 not to exceed $1,650,000,000.

(ii) State Unemployment Insurance: July 1 not to exceed $902,000,000.

(C) DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.—

(i) Education Reform: July 1 not to exceed $512,000,000.

(ii) Education for the Disadvantaged: July 1 not to exceed $2,462,000,000.

(iii) School Improvement Program: July 1 not to exceed $975,000,000.

(iv) Special Education: July 1 not to exceed $2,048,000,000.

(v) Vocational Education: July 1 not to exceed $858,000,000.

(D) DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.—Grants to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation: September 30 not to exceed $343,000,000.

(E) DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS.—Medical Care (equipment-land-structures): August 1 not to exceed $900,000,000.

(F) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.—Hazardous Substance Superfund: September 1 not to exceed $100,000,000.

(d) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—Subsections (b) and (c) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

(e) FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under this section may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

(f) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—If a point of order is sustained under this section against a conference report, the report shall be disposed of as provided in section 313(d) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

(g) PRECATORY AMENDMENTS.—For purposes of interpreting section 305(b)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, an amendment is not germane if it contains only precatory language.

(h) SUNSET.—Except for subsection (g), this section shall expire effective October 1, 2002.

SEC. 211. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FEDERAL RESERVE SURPLUSES.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to ensure that transfers from nonbudgetary governmental entities such as the Federal Reserve banks shall not be used to offset increased on-budget spending when such transfers produce no real budgetary or economic effects.

(b) BUDGETARY RULE.—For purposes of points of order under this resolution and the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, provisions contained in any bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that affects any surplus funds of the Federal Reserve banks shall not be scored with respect to the level of budget authority, outlays, or revenues contained in such legislation.

SEC. 212. REAFFIRMING THE PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF REVENUE OFFSETS FOR DISCRETIONARY SPENDING.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to reaffirm Congress' belief that the discretionary spending limits should be adhered to and not circumvented by increasing taxes.

(b) RESTATEMENT OF BUDGETARY RULE.—For purposes of points of order under this resolution and the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, provisions contained in an appropriations bill (or an amendment thereto or a conference report thereon) resulting in increased revenues shall continue not to be scored with respect to the level of budget authority or outlays contained in such legislation.

SEC. 213. APPLICATION AND EFFECT OF CHANGES IN ALLOCATIONS AND AGGREGATES.

(a) APPLICATION.—Any adjustments of allocations and aggregates made pursuant to this concurrent resolution for any measure shall—

(1) apply while that measure is under consideration;

(2) take effect upon the enactment of that measure; and

(3) be published in the Congressional Record as soon as practicable.

(b) EFFECT OF CHANGED ALLOCATIONS AND AGGREGATES.—Revised allocations and aggregates resulting from these adjustments shall be considered for the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 as allocations and aggregates contained in this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 214. RESERVE FUND TO FOSTER THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND THE EMPLOYMENT AND INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR FAMILIES.

(a) ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Whenever the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill, or an amendment thereto is offered, or a conference report thereon is submitted, that facilitates children with disabilities receiving needed health care at home and complies with paragraph (2), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may increase the spending aggregate and allocation of budget authority and outlays to that committee by the amount of budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) provided by that legislation for such purpose in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) CONDITION.—Legislation complies with this paragraph if it finances health programs designed to allow children with disabilities to access the health services they need to remain at home with their families while allowing their families to become or remain employed.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—The adjustments to the spending aggregates and allocations required by subsection (a) shall not exceed $50,000,000 in budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for fiscal year 2001 and shall not exceed $300,000,000 in budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

SEC. 215. EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING POWERS.

Congress adopts the provisions of this title—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, and as such they shall be considered as part of the rules of each House, or of that House to which they specifically apply, and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent therewith; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change those rules (so far as they relate to that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

SEC. 216. RESERVE FUND FOR MILITARY RETIREE HEALTH CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate, aggregates, allocations, functional totals, and other budgetary levels and limits may be revised for Department of Defense authorization legislation reported by the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate to fund improvements to health care programs for military retirees and their dependents in order to fulfill the promises made to them: Provided, That the enactment of that legislation will not cause an on-budget deficit for—

(1) fiscal year 2001; or

(2) the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

(b) REVISED LEVELS.—Upon the consideration of legislation pursuant to subsection (a), the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may file with the Senate appropriately revised allocations under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and revised functional levels and aggregates to carry out this section. These revised allocations, functional levels, and aggregates shall be considered for the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 as allocations, functional levels, and aggregates contained in this resolution.

SEC. 217. RESERVE FUND FOR EARLY LEARNING AND PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

(a) ADJUSTMENT.—When the Committee on Education and Workforce of the House of Representatives or the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate reports a bill, an amendment is offered in the House of Representatives or the Senate, or a conference report is filed that improves opportunities at the local level for early learning, brain development, and school readiness for young children from birth to age 6 and offers support programs for such families, particularly those with special needs such as mental health issues and behavioral disorders, the relevant chairman of the Committee on the Budget may increase the allocation aggregates, functions, totals, and other budgetary totals in the resolution by the amount of budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) provided by the legislation for such purpose in accordance with subsection (b) if the legislation does not cause an on-budget deficit.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—The adjustments to the aggregates and totals pursuant to subsection (a) shall not exceed $8,500,000,000 on-budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for the period fiscal year 2001 through 2005.

TITLE III—SENSE OF THE SENATE PROVISIONS

SEC. 301. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON CONTROLLING AND ELIMINATING THE GROWING INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM OF TUBERCULOSIS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) According to the World Health Organization—

(A) nearly 2,000,000 people worldwide die each year of tuberculosis-related illnesses;

(B) one-third of the world's total population is infected with tuberculosis; and

(C) tuberculosis is the world's leading killer of women between 15- and 44-years old and is a leading cause of children becoming orphans.

(2) Because of the ease of transmission of tuberculosis, its international persistence and growth pose a direct public health threat to

those nations that had previously largely controlled the disease. This is complicated in the United States by the growth of the homeless population, the rate of incarceration, international travel, immigration, and HIV/AIDS.

(3) With nearly 40 percent of the tuberculosis cases in the United States attributable to foreign-born persons, tuberculosis will never be eliminated in the United States until it is controlled abroad.

(4) The means exist to control tuberculosis through screening, diagnosis, treatment, patient compliance, monitoring, and ongoing review of outcomes.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assumes that additional resources should be provided to fund international tuberculosis control efforts at $60,000,000 in fiscal year 2001, consistent with authorizing legislation approved by the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

SEC. 302. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) in 1998, 33.2 percent of women in the labor force have children under 14;

(2) in 1998, 65.2 percent of women with children younger than age 6, and 78.4 percent of women with children ages 6 through 17 were in the labor force, and 41.6 percent of women with children younger than 3 were employed full-time;

(3) 1,920,000 couples both working and with children under 18 had family incomes of under $30,000 (10.3 percent);

(4)(A) in 1998, 11,700,000 children out of 21,300,000 (55.1 percent) under the age of 5 have employed mothers;

(B) 18.4 percent of children under 6 are cared for by their fathers at home;

(C) another 5.5 percent (562,000) are looked after by their mother either at home or away from home; and

(D) in other words, less than a quarter (23.9 percent) of these children are taken care of by 1 parent;

(5) a 1997 General Accounting Office study found that the increased work participation requirement of the welfare reform law will cause the need for child care to exceed the known supply;

(6) a 1995 study by the Urban Institute of child care prices in 6 cities found that the average cost of daycare for a 2-year-old in a child care center ranged from $3,100 to $8,100;

(7) for an entry-level worker, the family's child care costs at the average price of care for an infant in a child care center would be at least 50 percent of family income in 5 of the 6 cities examined;

(8) a large number of low- and middle-income families sacrifice a second full-time income so that a parent may be at home with the child;

(9) the average income of 2-parent families with a single income (a family with children, wife does not work) is $13,566 less than the average income of 2-parent families with 2 incomes;

(10) a recent National Institute for Child Health and Development study found that the greatest factor in the development of a young child is ''what is happening at home and in families''; and

(11) increased tax relief directed at making child care more affordable, and increased funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, would take significant steps toward bringing quality child care within the reach of many parents, and would increase the options available to parents in deciding how best to care for their children.

(b) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution and legislation enacted pursuant to this resolution assume—

(1) that tax relief should be directed to parents who are struggling to afford quality child care, including those who wish to stay home to care for a child, and should be included in any tax cut package; and

(2) a total of $4,567,000,000 in funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant in fiscal year 2001.

SEC. 303. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON TAX RELIEF FOR COLLEGE TUITION PAID AND FOR INTEREST PAID ON STUDENT LOANS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) in our increasingly competitive global economy, the attainment of a higher education is critical to the economic success of an individual, as evidenced by the fact that, in 1975, college graduates earned an average of 57 percent more than those who just finished high school, compared to 76 percent more today;

(2) the cost of attaining a higher education has outpaced both inflation and median family incomes;

(3) specifically, over the past 20 years, the cost of college tuition has quadrupled (growing faster than any consumer item, including health care and nearly twice as fast as inflation) and 8 times as fast as median household incomes;

(4) despite recent increases passed by Congress, the value of the maximum Pell Grant has declined 23 percent since 1975 in inflation-adjusted terms, forcing more students to rely on student loans to finance the cost of a higher education;

(5) from 1992 to 1998, the demand for student loans soared 82 percent and the average student loan increased 367 percent;

(6) according to the Department of Education, there is approximately $150,000,000,000 in outstanding student loan debt, and students borrowed more during the 1990's than during the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's combined; and

(7) in Congress, proposals have been made to address the rising cost of tuition and mounting student debt, including a bipartisan proposal to provide a deduction for tuition paid and a credit for interest paid on student loans.

(b) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution and legislation enacted pursuant to this resolution assume that any tax cut package reported by the Finance Committee and passed by Congress during the fiscal year 2001 budget reconciliation process include tax relief for college tuition paid and for interest paid on student loans.

SEC. 304. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the National Institutes of Health is the Nation's foremost research center;

(2) the Nation's commitment to and investment in biomedical research has resulted in better health and an improved quality of life for all Americans;

(3) continued biomedical research funding must be ensured so that medical doctors and scientists have the security to commit to conducting long-term research studies;

(4) funding for the National Institutes of Health should continue to increase in order to prevent the cessation of biomedical research studies and the loss of medical doctors and research scientists to private research organizations; and

(5) the National Institutes of Health conducts research protocols without proprietary interests, thereby ensuring that the best health care is researched and made available to the Nation.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume increased funding in function 550 (Health) for the National Institutes of Health of $2,700,000,000, reflecting the commitment made in the fiscal year 1998 Senate Budget Resolution to double the National Institute of Health budget by 2003.

SEC. 305. SENSE OF THE SENATE SUPPORTING FUNDING LEVELS IN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ACT.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that of the amounts provided for elementary and secondary education within the Budget Function 500 of this resolution for fiscal years 2001 through 2005, such funds shall be appropriated in proportion to and in accordance with the levels authorized in the Educational Opportunities Act, S. 2.

SEC. 306. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON ADDITIONAL BUDGETARY RESOURCES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) In its review of government operations, the General Accounting Office noted that it was unable to determine the extent of improper government payments, due to the poor quality of agency accounting practices. In particular, the General Accounting Office cited the Government's inability to—

(A) ''properly account for and report billions of dollars of property, equipment, materials, and supplies and certain stewardship assets''; and

(B) ''properly prepare the Federal Government's financial statements, including balancing the statements, accounting for billions of dollars of transactions between governmental entities, and properly and consistently compiling the information in the financial statements.''.

(2) Private economic forecasters are currently more optimistic than the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). Blue Chip expects 2000 real GDP growth of 4.1 percent, whereas the Congressional Budget Office expects 3.3 percent growth. From 1999 through 2005, Blue Chip expects real GDP to grow more than 0.3 percentage points faster per year than the Congressional Budget Office does. Using budgetary rules of thumb, this latter difference translates into more than $150,000,000,000 over the 5-year budget window.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels contained in this resolution assume that—

(1) there are billions of dollars in wasted expenditures in the Federal Government that should be eliminated; and

(2) higher projected budget surpluses arising from reductions in government waste and stronger revenue inflows could be used in the future for additional tax relief or debt reduction.

SEC. 307. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON REGARDING THE INADEQUACY OF THE PAYMENTS FOR SKILLED NURSING CARE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) Congress confronted and addressed the funding crisis for medicare beneficiaries requiring skilled nursing care through the Balanced Budget Refinement Act of 1999;

(2) Congress recognized the need to address the inadequacy of the prospective payment system for certain levels of care, as well as the need to end arbitrary limits on rehabilitative therapies. Congress restored $2,700,000,000 to reduce access threats to skilled care for medicare beneficiaries; and

(3) Currently, more than 1,600 skilled nursing facilities caring for more than 175,000 frail and elderly Americans have filed for bankruptcy protection.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that—

(1) the Administration should identify areas where they have the authority to make changes to improve quality, including analyzing and fixing the labor component of the skilled nursing facility market basket update factor; and

(2) while Congress deliberates funding structural medicare reform and the addition of a prescription drug benefit, it must maintain the continued viability of the current skilled nursing benefit. Therefore, the committees of jurisdiction should ensure that medicare beneficiaries requiring skilled nursing care have access to that care and that those providers have the resources to meet the expectation for high quality care.

SEC. 308. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CARA PROGRAMS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that, if the Congress and *the President so choose, the following programs can be fully funded as discretionary programs in fiscal year 2001, including—*

(1) the Land and Water Conservation Fund programs;

(2) the Federal aid to Wildlife Fund;

(3) the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Grants;

(4) the National Historic Preservation Fund;

(5) the Payment in Lieu of Taxes; and

(6) the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

SEC. 309. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON VETERANS' MEDICAL CARE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) this budget addresses concerns about veterans' medical care;

(2) we successfully increased the appropriation for veterans' medical care by $1,700,000,000 last year, although the President had proposed no increase in funding in his budget; and

(3) this year's budget proposes to increase the veterans' medical care appropriation by $1,400,000,000, the level of funding in the President's budget.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume an increase of $1,400,000,000 in veterans' medical care appropriations in fiscal year 2001.

SEC. 310. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON IMPACT AID.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the Impact Aid, as created by Congress in 1950, fulfills a Federal obligation to local educational agencies impacted by a Federal presence;

(2) the Impact Aid provides funds to these local educational agencies to help them meet the basic educational needs of all their children, particularly the needs of transient military dependent students, Native American children, and students from low-income housing projects; and

(3) the Impact Aid is funded at a level less than what is required to fully fund ''all'' federally connected local educational agencies.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that the Impact Aid Program strive to reach the goal that all local educational agencies eligible for Impact Aid receive at a minimum, 40 percent of their maximum payment under sections 8002 and 8003.

SEC. 311. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON FUNDING FOR INCREASED ACREAGE UNDER THE CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM AND THE WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) have been successful, voluntary, incentive-based endeavors that over the last decade and a half have turned millions of acres of marginal cropland into reserves that protect wildlife in the United States, provide meaningful income to farmers and ranchers (especially in periods of collapsed commodity prices), and combat soil and water erosion. CRP and WRP also provide increased opportunities for hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.

(2) CRP provides landowners with technical and financial assistance, including annual rental payments, in exchange for removing environmentally sensitive farmland from production and implementing conservation practices. Currently, CRP includes around 31,300,000 acres in the United States.

(3) Similarly, WRP offers technical and financial assistance to landowners who select to restore wetlands. Currently, WRP includes 785,000 acres nationwide.

(4) Furthermore, bipartisan legislation has been introduced in the 106th Congress to increase the acreage permitted under both CRP and WRP. The Administration also supports raising the acreage limitations in both programs.

(5) Unfortunately, both CRP and WRP may soon become victims of their own success and their respective statutory acreage limitations unless Congress acts. Given the popularity and demand for these conservation programs, the statutory acreage limitations will likely exhaust resources available to producers who want to participate in CRP or WRP. As currently authorized, CRP has an enrollment cap of 36,400,000 acres and WRP is limited at 975,000 acres. As of October 1, 1999, enrollment in CRP stood at approximately 31,300,000 acres and enrollment in WRP at just over 785,000 acres.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that Congress and the Administration should take steps to raise the acreage limits of the CRP and WRP in order to make these programs available to aid the preservation and conservation of sensitive natural soil and water resources without negatively effecting rural communities. Further, such actions should help improve farm income for agricultural producers and restore prosperity and growth to rural sectors of the United States.

SEC. 312. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON TAX SIMPLIFICATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the tax code has become increasingly complex, undermining confidence in the system, and often undermining the principles of simplicity, efficiency, and equity;

(2) some have estimated that the resources required to keep records and file returns already cost American families an additional 10 percent to 20 percent over what they actually pay in income taxes; and

(3) if it is to enact a greatly simplified tax code, Congress should have a thorough understanding of the problem as well as specific proposals to consider.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that the Joint Committee on Taxation shall develop a report and alternative proposals on tax simplification by the end of the year, and the Department of the Treasury is requested to develop a report and alternative proposals on tax simplification by the end of the year.

SEC. 313. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON ANTITRUST ENFORCEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION REGARDING AGRICULTURE MERGERS AND ANTICOMPETITIVE ACTIVITY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice is charged with the civil and criminal enforcement of the antitrust laws, including the review of corporate mergers likely to reduce competition in particular markets, with a goal of protecting the competitive process;

(2) the Bureau of Competition of the Federal Trade Commission is also charged with enforcement of the antitrust laws, including the review of corporate mergers likely to reduce competition;

(3) the Antitrust Division and the Bureau of Competition are also responsible for the prosecution of companies and individuals who engage in anti-competitive behavior and unfair trade practices;

(4) the number of merger filings under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976, which the Department of Justice, in conjunction with the Federal Trade Commission, is required to review, has increased significantly in fiscal years 1998 and 1999;

(5) large agri-businesses have constituted part of this trend in mergers and acquisitions;

(6) farmers and small agricultural producers are experiencing one of the worst periods of economic downturn in years;

(7) farmers currently get less than a quarter of every retail food dollar, down from nearly half of every retail food dollar in 1952;

(8) the top 4 beef packers presently control 80 percent of the market, the top 4 pork producers control 57 percent of the market, and the largest sheep processors and poultry processors control 73 percent and 55 percent of the market, respectively;

(9) the 4 largest grain processing companies presently account for approximately 62 percent of the Nation's flour milling, and the 4 largest firms control approximately 75 percent of the wet corn milling and soybean crushing industry;

(10) farmers and small, independent producers are concerned about the substantial increase in concentration in the agriculture industry and significantly diminished opportunities in the marketplace; and

(11) farmers and small, independent producers are also concerned about possible anticompetitive behavior and unfair business practices in the agriculture industry.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that—

(1) the Antitrust Division and the Bureau of Competition will have adequate resources to enable them to meet their statutory requirements, including those related to reviewing increasingly numerous and complex mergers and investigating and prosecuting anticompetitive business activity; and

(2) these departments will—

(A) dedicate considerable resources to matters and transactions dealing with agri-business antitrust and competition; and

(B) ensure that all vertical and horizontal mergers implicating agriculture and all complaints regarding possible anticompetitive business practices in the agriculture industry will receive extraordinary scrutiny.

SEC. 314. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING FAIR MARKETS FOR AMERICAN FARMERS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) United States agricultural producers are the most efficient and competitive in the world;

(2) United States agricultural producers are at a competitive disadvantage in the world market because the European Union outspends the United States (on a dollar/acre basis) by a ratio of 10:1 on domestic support and by a ratio of 60:1 on export subsidies;

(3) the support the European Union gives their producers results in more prosperous rural communities in Europe than in the United States;

(4) the European Union blocked consensus at the World Trade Organization ministerial meeting in Seattle because Europe does not want to surrender its current advantage in world markets;

(5) despite the competitiveness of American farmers, the European advantage has led to a declining United States share of the world market for agricultural products;

(6) the United States Department of Agriculture reports that United States export growth has lagged behind that of our major competitors, resulting in a loss of United States market share, from 24 percent in 1981 to its current level of 18 percent;

(7) the United States Department of Agriculture also reports that United States market share of global agricultural trade has eroded steadily over the past 2 decades, which could culminate in the United States losing out to the European Union as the world's top agricultural exporter sometime in 2000;

(8) prices of agricultural commodities in the United States are at 50-year lows in real terms, creating a serious economic crisis in rural America; and

(9) fundamental fairness requires that the playing field be leveled so that United States farmers are no longer at a competitive disadvantage.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that—

(1) the United States should take steps to increase support for American farmers in order to level the playing field for United States agricultural producers and increase the leverage of the

United States in World Trade Organization negotiations on agriculture as long as such support is not trade distorting, and does not otherwise exceed or impair existing Uruguay Round obligations; and

(2) such actions should improve United States farm income and restore the prosperity of rural communities.

SEC. 315. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) without Social Security benefits, the elderly poverty rate among women would have been 52.2 percent, and among widows would have been 60.6 percent;

(2) women tend to live longer and tend to have lower lifetime earnings than men do;

(3) during their working years, women earn an average of 70 cents for every dollar men earn; and

(4) women spend an average of 11.5 years out of their careers to care for their families, and are more likely to work part-time than full-time.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that—

(1) women face unique obstacles in ensuring retirement security and survivor and disability stability;

(2) Social Security plays an essential role in guaranteeing inflation-protected financial stability for women throughout their old age;

(3) the Congress and the Administration should act, as part of Social Security reform, to ensure that widows and other poor elderly women receive more adequate benefits that reduce their poverty rates and that women, under whatever approach is taken to reform Social Security, should receive no lesser a share of overall federally funded retirement benefits than they receive today; and

(4) the sacrifice that women make to care for their family should be recognized during reform of Social Security and that women should not be penalized by taking an average of 11.5 years out of their careers to care for their family.

SEC. 316. PROTECTION OF BATTERED WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) Each year an estimated 1,000,000 women suffer nonfatal violence by an intimate partner.

(2) Nearly 1 out of 3 adult women can expect to experience at least 1 physical assault by a partner during adulthood.

(3) Domestic violence is statistically consistent across racial and ethnic lines. It does not discriminate based on race or economic status.

(4) The chance of being victimized by an intimate partner is 10 times greater for a woman than a man.

(5) Past and current victims of domestic violence are over-represented in the welfare population. It is estimated that at least 60 percent of current welfare beneficiaries have experienced some form of domestic violence.

(6) Abused women who do seek employment face barriers as a result of domestic violence. Welfare studies show that 15 to 50 percent of abused women report interference from their partner with education, training, or employment.

(7) The programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 have empowered communities to address the threat caused by domestic violence.

(8) Since 1995, Congress has appropriated close to $1,800,000,000 to fund programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, including the STOP program, shelters for battered women and children, the domestic violence hotline, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention injury control programs.

(9) The programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 have been and continue to comprise a successful national strategy for addressing the needs of battered women and the public health threat caused by this violence.

(10) The Supreme Court could act during this session to overturn a major protection and course of action provided for in the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. In United States v. Morrison/Brzonkala, the Supreme Court will address the issue of the constitutionality of the Federal civil rights remedy under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and may overturn congressional intent to elevate violence against women to a category protected under Federal civil rights law.

(11) The actions taken by the courts and the failure to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 has generated a great deal of concern in communities nationwide.

(12) Funding for the programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 is the only lifeline for battered women and Congress has a moral obligation to continue funding and to strengthen key components of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

(13) Congress and the Administration should work to ensure the continued funding of programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that, in light of the pending litigation challenging the constitutionality of the Federal civil rights remedy in the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and the lack of action on legislation reauthorizing and strengthening the provisions of that Act—

(1) Congress, through reauthorization of the programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, should work to eliminate economic barriers that trap women and children in violent homes and relationships; and

(2) full funding for the programs established by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 will be provided from the Violent Crime Reduction Fund.

SEC. 317. USE OF FALSE CLAIMS ACT IN COMBATTING MEDICARE FRAUD.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the solvency of the medicare trust funds is of vital importance to the well-being of the Nation's seniors and other vulnerable people in need of quality health care;

(2) fraud against the medicare trust funds is a major problem resulting in the depletion of the trust funds; and

(3) chapter 37 of title 31, United States Code (commonly referred to as the False Claims Act) and the qui tam provisions of that chapter are vital tools in combatting fraud against the medicare program.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that chapter 37 of title 31, United States Code (commonly referred to as the False Claims Act) and the qui tam provisions of that chapter are essential tools in combatting medicare fraud and should not be weakened in any way.

SEC. 318. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE NATIONAL GUARD.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the Army National Guard relies heavily upon thousands of full-time employees, Military Technicians and Active Guard/Reserves, to ensure unit readiness throughout the Army National Guard;

(2) these employees perform vital day-to-day functions, ranging from equipment maintenance to leadership and staff roles, that allow the drill weekends and annual active duty training of the traditional Guardsmen to be dedicated to preparation for the National Guard's warfighting and peacetime missions;

(3) when the ability to provide sufficient Active Guard/Reserves and Technicians end strength is reduced, unit readiness, as well as quality of life for soldiers and families is degraded;

(4) the Army National Guard, with agreement from the Department of Defense, requires a minimum essential requirement of 23,500 Active Guard/Reserves and 25,500 Technicians; and

(5) the fiscal year 2001 budget request for the Army National Guard provides resources sufficient for approximately 22,430 Active Guard/Reserves and 23,957 Technicians, end strength shortfalls of 1,052 and 1,543, respectively.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.— It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in the resolution assume that the Department of Defense will give priority to funding the Active Guard/Reserves and Military Technicians at levels authorized by Congress in the fiscal year 2000 Department of Defense authorization bill.

SEC. 319. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING MILITARY READINESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the Secretary of the Air Force stated that the United States Air Force's top unfunded readiness priority for fiscal year 2000 was its aircraft spares and repair parts account and top Air Force officers have said that getting more spares is a top priority to improve readiness rates;

(2) the Chief of Naval Operations stated that the aircraft spares and repair parts account for a top readiness priority important to the long-term health of the Navy;

(3) the General Accounting Office's study of personnel retention problems in the armed services cited shortages of spares and repair parts as a major reason why people are leaving the services;

(4) the fiscal year 2001 budget request decreases the Air Force's spares and repair parts account by 13 percent from fiscal year 2000 expected levels; and

(5) the fiscal year 2001 budget request decreases the Navy's spares and repair parts account by 6 percent from the fiscal year 2000 expected levels.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals in the budget resolution assume that Congress will protect the Department of Defense's readiness accounts, including spares and repair parts, and operations and maintenance, and use the requested levels as the minimum baseline for fiscal year 2001 authorization and appropriations.

SEC. 320. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON COMPENSATION FOR THE CHINESE EMBASSY BOMBING IN BELGRADE.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume funds designated to compensate the People's Republic of China for the damage inadvertently done to their embassy in Belgrade by NATO forces in May 1999, should not be appropriated from the international affairs budget.

SEC. 321. SENSE OF THE SENATE SUPPORTING FUNDING OF DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVES.

(a) The Senate finds that—

(1) computers, the Internet, and information networks are not luxury items but basic tools largely responsible for driving the current economic expansions;

(2) information technology utility relies on software applications and online content;

(3) access to computers and the Internet and the ability to use this technology effectively is becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political, and social life; and

(4) unequal access to technology and high-tech skills by income, educational level, race, and geography could deepen and reinforce the divisions that exist within American society.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that the Committees on Appropriations and Finance should support efforts that address the digital divide, including tax incentives and funding to—

(1) broaden access to information technologies;

(2) provide workers and teachers with information technology training;

(3) promote innovative online content and software applications that will improve commerce, education, and quality of life; and

(4) help provide information and communications technology to underserved communities.

SEC. 322. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING IMMUNIZATION FUNDING.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) vaccines protect children and adults against serious and potentially fatal diseases;

(2) society saves up to $24 in medical and societal costs for every dollar spent on vaccines;

(3) every day, 11,000 babies are born—4,000,000 each year—and each child needs up to 19 doses of vaccine by age 2;

(4) approximately 1,000,000 2-year-olds have not received all of the recommended vaccine doses;

(5) the immunization program under section 317(j)(1) under the Public Health Service Act, administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, provides grants to States and localities for critical activities including immunization registries, outbreak control, provider education, outreach efforts, and linkages with other public health and welfare services;

(6) Federal grants to States and localities for these activities have declined from $271,000,000 in 1995 to $139,000,000 in 2000;

(7) because of these funding reductions States are struggling to maintain immunization rates and have implemented severe cuts to immunization delivery activities;

(8) even with significant gains in national immunization rates, underimmunized children still exist and there are a number of subpopulations where coverage rates remain low and are actually declining;

(9) rates in many of the Nation's urban areas, including Chicago and Houston, are unacceptably low; and

(10) these pockets of need create pools of susceptible children and increase the risk of dangerous disease outbreaks.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in the resolution assume that Congress should enact legislation that provides $214,000,000 in funding for immunization grants under section 317 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b) for infrastructure and delivery activities, including targeted support for immunization project areas with low or declining immunization rates or who have subpopulations with special needs.

SEC. 323. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING TAX CREDITS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES PROVIDING HEALTH INSURANCE TO LOW-INCOME EMPLOYEES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) 25,000,000 workers in the United States were uninsured in 1997 and more than two-thirds of the uninsured workers earn less than $20,000 annually, according to a Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation report;

(2) the percentage of employees of small businesses who have employer-sponsored health insurance coverage decreased from 52 percent in 1996 to 47 percent in 1998; for the smallest employers, those with 3 to 9 workers, the percentage of employees covered by employer-sponsored health insurance fell from 36 percent in 1996 to 31 percent in 1998;

(3) between 1996 and 1998, health premiums for small businesses increased 5.2 percent; premiums increased by 8 percent for the smallest employers, the highest increase among all small businesses;

(4) monthly family coverage for workers at firms with 3 to 9 employees cost $520 in 1998, compared to $462 for family coverage for workers at large firms; and

(5) only 39 percent of small businesses with a significant percentage of low-income employees offer employer-provided health insurance and such companies are half as likely to offer health benefits to such employees as are companies that have only a small percentage of low-income employees.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that Congress should enact legislation that allows small businesses to claim a tax credit when they provide health insurance to low-income employees.

SEC. 324. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON FUNDING FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) our success in the fight against crime and improvements in the administration of justice are the result of a bipartisan effort; and

(2) since 1993 the Congress and the President have increased justice funding by 92 percent, and a strong commitment to law enforcement and the administration of justice remains appropriate.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that funds to improve the justice system will be available as follows:

(1) $665,000,000 for the expanded support of direct Federal enforcement, adjudicative, and correctional-detention activities.

(2) $50,000,000 in additional funds to combat terrorism, including cyber crime.

(3) $41,000,000 in additional funds for construction costs for the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

(4) $200,000,000 in support of Customs and Immigration and Nationalization Service port of entry officers for the development and implementation of the ACE computer system designed to meet critical trade and border security needs.

(5) Funding is available for the continuation of such programs as: the Byrne Grant Program, Violence Against Women, Juvenile Accountability Block Grants, First Responder Training, Local Law Enforcement Block Grants, Weed and Seed, Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth in Sentencing, State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, Drug Courts, Residential Substance Abuse Treatment, Crime Identification Technologies, Bulletproof Vests, Counterterrorism, Interagency Law Enforcement Coordination.

SEC. 325. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE PELL GRANT.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) public investment in higher education yields a return of several dollars for each dollar invested;

(2) higher education promotes economic opportunity for individuals; for example recipients of bachelor's degrees earn an average of 75 percent per year more than those with high school diplomas and experience half as much unemployment as high school graduates;

(3) access to a college education has become a hallmark of American society, and is vital to upholding our belief in equality of opportunity;

(4) for a generation, the Federal Pell Grant has served as an established and effective means of providing access to higher education;

(5) over the past decade, Pell Grant has failed to keep up with inflation. Over the past 25 years, the value of the average Pell Grant has decreased by 23 percent—it is now worth only 77 percent of what Pell Grants were worth in 1975;

(6) grant aid as a portion of student aid has fallen significantly over the past 5 years. Grant aid used to comprise 55 percent of total aid awarded and loans comprised just over 40 percent. Now that trend has been reversed so that loans comprise nearly 60 percent of total aid awarded and grants only comprise 40 percent of total aid awarded;

(7) the percentage of freshmen attending public and private 4-year institutions from families whose income is below the national median has fallen since 1981.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that within the discretionary allocation provided to the Committee on Appropriations, the funding for the maximum Pell Grant award should be at or above the level requested by the President.

SEC. 326. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC EDUCATION REFORM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) Recent scientific evidence demonstrates that enhancing children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development before the age of 6 results in tremendous benefits throughout life.

(2) Successful schools are led by well-trained, highly qualified principals, but many principals do not get the training in management skills that the principals need to ensure their school provides an excellent education for every child.

(3) Good teachers are a crucial catalyst to quality education, but 1 in 4 new teachers do not meet State certification requirements; each year more than 50,000 underprepared teachers enter the classroom; and 12 percent of new teachers have had no teacher training at all.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that the Federal Government should support State and local educational agencies engaged in comprehensive reform of their public education system and that any public education reform should include at least the following principles:

(1) Every child should begin school ready to learn.

(2) Training and development for principals and teachers should be a priority.

SEC. 327. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON PROVIDING ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) United States international leadership is essential to maintaining security and peace for all Americans;

(2) such leadership depends on effective diplomacy as well as a strong military;

(3) effective diplomacy requires adequate resources both for operations and security of United States embassies and for international programs;

(4) in addition to building peace, prosperity, and democracy around the world, programs in the International Affairs (150) budget serve United States interests by ensuring better jobs and a higher standard of living, promoting the health of our citizens and preserving our natural environment, and protecting the rights and safety of those who travel or do business overseas;

(5) real spending for International Affairs has declined more than 40 percent since the mid-1980's, at the same time that major new challenges and opportunities have arisen from the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the worldwide trends toward democracy and free markets;

(6) current ceilings on discretionary spending will impose severe additional cuts in funding for International Affairs;

(7) improved security for United States diplomatic missions and personnel will place further strain on the International Affairs budget absent significant additional resources;

(8) the United States cannot reduce efforts to safeguard nuclear materials in the former Soviet States or shortchange initiatives aimed at maintaining stability on the Korean peninsula, where 37,000 United States forces are deployed. We cannot reduce support for peace in the Middle East or in Northern Ireland or in the Balkans. We cannot stop fighting terror or simply surrender to the spread of HIV/AIDS. We must continue to support all of these things, which are difficult to achieve without adequate and realistic funding levels; and

(9) the President's request for funds for fiscal year 2001 would adequately finance our International Affairs programs without detracting from our defense and domestic needs. It would help keep America prosperous and secure. It would enable us to leverage the contributions of allies and friends on behalf of democracy and peace. It would allow us to protect the interests of Americans who travel, study, or do business overseas. It would do all these things and more for about 1 penny of every dollar the Federal Government spends.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that additional budgetary resources should be identified for function 150 to enable successful United States international leadership.

SEC. 328. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) More than 16,000,000 people have been killed by Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) since the epidemic began.

(2) 14,000,000 Africans have died as a result of the AIDS epidemic. Eighty-four percent of the worldwide deaths from AIDS have occurred in sub-Saharan Africa.

(3) Each day, AIDS kills 5,500 Africans, and infects 11,000 more.

(4) By the end of 2000, 10,400,000 children in sub-Saharan Africa will have lost one or both parents, to AIDS.

(5) Over 85 percent of the world's HIV-positive children live in Africa.

(6) Fewer than 5 percent of those living with AIDS in Africa have access to even the most basic care.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the functional totals underlying this resolution on the budget assume that Congress has recognized the catastrophic effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, and seeks to maximize the effectiveness of the United States' efforts to combat the disease through any necessary authorization or appropriations;

(2) Congress should strengthen ongoing programs which address education and prevention, testing, the care of AIDS orphans, and improving home and community-based care options for those living with AIDS; and

(3) Congress should seek additional or new tools to combat the epidemic, including initiatives to encourage vaccine development and programs aimed at preventing mother-to-child transmission of the disease.

SEC. 329. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING TRIBAL COLLEGES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) More than 26,500 students from 250 tribes nationwide attend tribal colleges. The colleges serve students of all ages, many of whom are moving from welfare to work. The vast majority of tribal college students are first-generation college students.

(2) While annual appropriations for tribal colleges have increased modestly in recent years, core operation funding levels are still about half of the $6,000 per Indian student level authorized by the Tribally Controlled College or University Act.

(3) Although tribal colleges received a $3,000,000 increase in funding in fiscal year 2000, because of rising student populations and other factors, these institutions may face an actual per-student decrease in funding over fiscal year 1999.

(4) Per-student funding for tribal colleges is roughly half the amount given to mainstream community colleges.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that—

(1) the Senate recognizes the funding difficulties faced by tribal colleges and assumes that priority consideration will be provided to them through funding for the Tribally Controlled College and University Act, the 1994 Land Grant Institutions, and title III of the Higher Education Act; and

(2) such priority consideration reflects Congress' intent to continue work toward current statutory Federal funding goals for the tribal colleges.

SEC. 330. SENSE OF THE SENATE TO PROVIDE RELIEF FROM THE MARRIAGE PENALTY.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) marriage is the foundation of the American society and a key institution for preserving our values;

(2) the tax code should not penalize those who choose to marry;

(3) a report to the Treasury Department's Office of Tax Analysis estimates that in 1999, 48 percent of married couples will pay a marriage penalty under the present tax system;

(4) the Congressional Budget Office found that the average penalty amounts to $1,400 a year.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the level in this budget resolution assume that the Congress shall—

(1) pass marriage penalty tax relief legislation that begins a phasedown of this penalty in 2001;

(2) consider such legislation prior to April 15, 2000.

SEC. 331. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CONTINUED USE OF FEDERAL FUEL TAXES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF OUR NATION'S HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES, AND TRANSIT SYSTEMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) current law, as stipulated in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA–21), requires all Federal gasoline taxes be deposited into the Highway Trust Fund;

(2) current law, as stipulated in TEA–21, guarantees that all such deposits to the Highway Trust Fund are spent in full on the construction and rehabilitation of our Nation's highways, bridges, and transit systems;

(3) the funding guarantees contained in TEA–21 are essential to the ability of the Nation's Governors, highway commissioners, and transit providers to address the growing backlog of critical transportation investments in order to stem the deterioration of our road and transit systems, improve the safety of our highways, and reduce the growth of congestion that is choking off economic growth in communities across the Nation;

(4) any effort to reduce the Federal gasoline tax or de-link the relationship between highway user fees and highway spending pose a great danger to the integrity of the Highway Trust Fund and the ability of the States to invest adequately in our transportation infrastructure; and

(5) proposals to reduce the Federal gasoline tax threaten to endanger the spending levels guaranteed in TEA–21 while providing no guarantee that consumers will experience any reduction in price at the gas pump.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals in this budget resolution do not assume the reduction of any Federal gasoline taxes on either a temporary or permanent basis.

SEC. 332. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that the Senate will not, on behalf of Vice President Al Gore, increase gasoline and diesel fuel taxes by $1.50 per gallon effective July 1, 2000, and by an additional $1.50 per gallon effective fiscal year 2005, as part of "a coordinated global program to accomplish the strategic goal of completely eliminating the internal combustion engine over, say, a twenty-five year period" since "their cumulative impact on the global environment is posing a mortal threat to the security of every nation that is more deadly than that of any military enemy we are ever again likely to confront".

SEC. 333. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL BACKGROUND CHECK SYSTEM FOR LONG-TERM CARE WORKERS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The impending retirement of the baby boom generation will greatly increase the demand and need for quality long-term care and it is incumbent on Congress and the President to ensure that medicare and medicaid patients are protected from abuse, neglect, and mistreatment.

(2) Although the majority of long-term care facilities do an excellent job in caring for elderly and disabled patients, incidents of abuse and neglect and mistreatment do occur at an unacceptable rate and are not limited to nursing homes alone.

(3) Current Federal and State safeguards are inadequate because there is little or no information sharing between States about known abusers and no common State procedures for tracking abusers from State to State and facility to facility.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying the functional totals in this concurrent resolution on the budget assume that a national registry of abusive long-term care workers should be established by building upon existing infrastructures at the Federal and State levels that would enable long-term care providers who participate in the medicare and medicaid programs to conduct background checks on prospective employees.

SEC. 334. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING THE PRICE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) Today, two-thirds of senior citizens in the United States have access to prescription drugs through health insurance coverage.

(2) However, it is difficult for many Americans, including senior citizens, to afford the prescription drugs that they need to stay healthy.

(3) Many senior citizens in the United States leave the country and go to Canada or Mexico to buy prescription drugs that are developed, manufactured, and approved in the United States in order to buy such drugs at lower prices than such drugs are sold for in the United States.

(4) According to the General Accounting Office, a consumer in the United States pays on average ⅓ more for a prescription drug than a consumer pays for the same drug in another country.

(5) The United States has made a strong commitment to supporting the research and development of new drugs through taxpayer-supported funding of the National Institutes of Health, through the research and development tax credit, and through other means.

(6) The development of new drugs is important because the use of such drugs enables people to live longer and lead healthier, more productive lives.

(7) Citizens of other countries should pay a portion of the research and development costs for new drugs, or their fair share of such costs, rather than just reap the benefits of such drugs.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the budgetary levels in this resolution assume that the cost disparity between identical prescription drugs sold in the United States, Canada, and Mexico should be reduced or eliminated.

SEC. 335. SENSE OF THE SENATE AGAINST FEDERAL FUNDING OF SMOKE SHOPS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) Smoking begun by children during their teen years and even earlier turns the lives of far too many Americans into nightmares decades later, plagued by disease and premature death.

(2) The Federal Government should leave a legacy of more healthy Americans and fewer victims of tobacco-related illness.

(3) Efforts by the Federal Government should seek to protect young people from the dangers of smoking.

(4) Discount tobacco stores, sometimes known as smoke shops, operate to sell high volumes of cigarettes and other tobacco products, often at significantly reduced prices, with each tobacco outlet often selling millions of discount cigarettes each year.

(5) Studies by the Surgeon General and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention demonstrate that children are particularly susceptible to price differentials in cigarettes, such as those available through smoke shop discounts.

(6) The Department of Housing and Urban Development is using Federal funds for grants to construct not less than 6 smoke shops or facilities that contain a smoke shop.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the budget levels in this resolution assume that no Federal funds may be used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide any grant or other assistance to construct, operate, or otherwise benefit a smoke shop or other tobacco outlet.

SEC. 336. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE NEED TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) On average, 12 children die from gun fire everyday in America.

(2) On May 20, 1999, the Senate passed the Violent and Repeat Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act, by a vote of 73 to 25, in part, to stem gun-related violence in the United States.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in function 750 of this resolution assume that Congress should—

(1) pass the conference report to accompany H.R. 1501, the Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act, including Senate-passed provisions, with the purpose of limiting access to firearms by juveniles, convicted felons, and other persons prohibited by law from purchasing or possessing firearms; and

(2) consider H.R. 1501 not later than April 20, 2000.

SEC. 337. SENSE OF THE SENATE SUPPORTING ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001 FOR MEDICAL CARE FOR OUR NATION'S VETERANS.

(a) It is the sense of the Senate that the provisions in this resolution assume that if the Congressional Budget Office determines there is an on-budget surplus for fiscal year 2001, $500,000,000 of that surplus will be restored to the programs cut in this amendment.

(b) It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying this budget resolution assume that none of these offsets will come from defense or veterans, and to the extent possible should come from administrative functions.

SEC. 338. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING MEDICAL CARE FOR VETERANS.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the provisions of this resolution assume that if the Congressional Budget Office determines there is an on-budget surplus for fiscal year 2001, $500,000,000 of that surplus will be restored to the programs cut by this amendment; and

(2) the assumptions underlying this resolution assume that none of the offsets made by this amendment will come from defense or veterans and should, to the extent possible, come from administrative functions.

SEC. 339. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING INVESTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) Government investment of the Social Security trust funds in the stock market is a gamble Congress should be unwilling to make on behalf of the millions who receive and depend on Social Security to meet their retirement needs;

(2) in 1999, the Senate voted 99–0 to oppose Government investment of the Social Security trust funds in private financial markets;

(3) in addition to the unanimous opposition of the United States Senate, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and Securities and Exchange Commissioner Arthur Levitt also oppose the idea; and

(4) despite this opposition, and despite the dangers inherent in having the Government invest Social Security trust funds in private financial markets, President Clinton has once again suggested, on page 37 of the Administration's proposed fiscal year 2001 Federal budget, that the Government invest part of the Social Security trust funds in corporate equities.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying the functional totals in this resolution assume that the Federal Government should not directly invest contributions made to the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund established under section 201 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401), or any interest derived from those contributions, in private financial markets.

SEC. 340. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) A digital divide exists in America. Low-income, urban and rural families are less likely to have access to the Internet and computers. African American and Hispanic families are only 2/5 as likely to have Internet access as white families. Access by Native Americans to the Internet and to computers is statistically negligible.

(2) Regardless of income level, Americans living in rural areas lag behind in Internet access. Individuals with lower incomes who live in rural areas are half as likely to have Internet access as individuals who live in urban areas.

(3) The digital divide for the poorest Americans has grown by 29 percent since 1997.

(4) Access to computers and the Internet and the ability to use this technology effectively is becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political and social life.

(5) Unequal access to technology and high-tech skills by income, educational level, race and geography could deepen and reinforce the divisions that exist within American society.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals underlying this resolution on the budget assume that—

(1) to ensure that all children are computer literate by the time they finish the eighth grade, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, income, geography or disability, to broaden access to information technologies, to provide workers, teachers and students with information technology training, and to promote innovative online content and software applications that will improve commerce, education and quality of life, initiatives that increase digital opportunity should be provided for as follows:

(A) $200,000,000 in tax incentives should be provided to encourage private sector donation of high-quality computers, sponsorship of community technology centers, training, technical services and computer repair;

(B) $450,000,000 should be provided for teacher training;

(C) $150,000,000 for new teacher training;

(D) $400,000,000 should be provided for school technology and school libraries;

(E) $20,000,000 should be provided to place computers and trained personnel in Boys & Girls Clubs;

(F) $25,000,000 should be provided to create an E-Corps within Americorps;

(G) $100,000,000 should be provided to create 1,000 Community Technology Centers in low-income urban and rural communities;

(H) $50,000,000 should be provided for public/private partnerships to expand home access to computers and the Internet for low-income families;

(I) $45,000,000 should be provided to promote innovative applications of information and communications technology for underserved communities;

(J) $10,000,000 should be provided to prepare Native Americans for careers in Information Technology and other technical fields; and

(2) all Americans should have access to broadband telecommunications capability as soon as possible and as such, initiatives that increase broadband deployment should be funded, including $25,000,000 to accelerate private sector deployment of broadband and networks in underserved urban and rural communities.

SEC. 341. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this budget resolution assume that among its reform options, Congress should explore a medicare prescription drug proposal that—

(1) is voluntary;

(2) increases access for all medicare beneficiaries;

(3) is designed to provide meaningful protection and bargaining power for medicare beneficiaries in obtaining prescription drugs;

(4) is affordable for all medicare beneficiaries and for the medicare program;

(5) is administered using private sector entities and competitive purchasing techniques;

(6) is consistent with broader medicare reform;

(7) preserves and protects the financial integrity of the medicare trust funds;

(8) does not increase medicare beneficiary premiums; and

(9) provides a prescription drug benefit as soon as possible.

SEC. 342. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING FUNDING FOR NEW EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the budgetary levels in this resolution assume that Congress' first priority should be to fully fund the programs described under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.) at the originally promised level of 40 percent before Federal funds are appropriated for new education programs.

SEC. 343. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING ENFORCEMENT OF FEDERAL FIREARMS LAWS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The Clinton Administration has failed to adequately enforce Federal firearms laws. Between 1992 and 1998, Triggerlock gun prosecutions—prosecutions of defendants who use a firearm in the commission of a felony—dropped nearly 50 percent, from 7,045 to approximately 3,800.

(2) The decline in Federal firearms prosecutions was not due to a lack of adequate resources. During the period when Federal firearms prosecutions decreased nearly 50 percent, the overall budget of the Department of Justice increased 54 percent.

(3) It is a Federal crime to possess a firearm on school grounds under section 922(q) of title 18, United States Code. The Clinton Department of Justice prosecuted only 8 cases under this provision of law during 1998, even though more than 6,000 students brought firearms to school that year. The Clinton Administration prosecuted only 5 such cases during 1997.

(4) It is a Federal crime to transfer a firearm to a juvenile under section 922(x) of title 18, United States Code. The Clinton Department of Justice prosecuted only 6 cases under this provision of law during 1998 and only 5 during 1997.

(5) It is a Federal crime to transfer or possess a semiautomatic assault weapon under section 922(v) of title 18, United States Code. The Clinton Department of Justice prosecuted only 4 cases under this provision of law during 1998 and only 4 during 1997.

(6) It is a Federal crime for any person ''who has been adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to a mental institution'' to possess or purchase a firearm under section 922(g) of title 18, United States Code. Despite this Federal law, mental health adjudications are not placed on the national instant criminal background system established under section 103(b) of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (18 U.S.C. 922 note).

(7) It is a Federal crime for any person knowingly to make any false statement in the attempted purchase of a firearm under section

922(a)(6) of title 18, United States Code. It is also a Federal crime for convicted felons to possess or purchase a firearm under section 922(g) of title 18, United States Code.

(8) More than 500,000 convicted felons and other prohibited purchasers have been prevented from buying firearms from licensed dealers since the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act was enacted. When these felons attempted to purchase a firearm, they violated section 922(a)(6) of title 18, United States Code, by making a false statement under oath that they were not disqualified from purchasing a firearm. Nonetheless, of the more than 500,000 violations, only approximately 200 of the felons have been referred to the Department of Justice for prosecution.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the assumptions underlying the functional totals in this concurrent resolution on the budget assume that Federal funds will be used for an effective law enforcement strategy requiring a commitment to enforcing existing Federal firearms laws by—

(1) designating not less than 1 Assistant United States Attorney in each district to prosecute Federal firearms violations and thereby expand Project Exile nationally;

(2) upgrading the national instant criminal background system established under section 103(b) of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (18 U.S.C. 922 note) by encouraging States to place mental health adjudications on that system and by improving the overall speed and efficiency of that system; and

(3) providing incentive grants to States to encourage States to impose mandatory minimum sentences for firearm offenses based on section 924(c) of title 18, United States Code, and to prosecute those offenses in State court.

SEC. 344. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE CENSUS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution and legislation enacted pursuant to this resolution assume that no American will be prosecuted, fined or in anyway harassed by the Federal Government or its agents for failure to respond to any census questions which refer to an individual's race, national origin, living conditions, personal habits or mental and/or physical condition, but that all Americans are encouraged to send in their census forms.

SEC. 345. SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT ANY INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY TAX RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES.

It is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals underlying this resolution on the budget assume that the minimum wage should be increased as provided for in amendment number 2547, the Domenici and others amendment to S. 625, the Bankruptcy Reform legislation.

SEC. 346. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING THE MINIMUM WAGE.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that Congress should enact legislation to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) to increase the Federal minimum wage by $1.00 over 1 year with a $0.50 increase effective May 2, 2000 and another $0.50 increase effective on May 2, 2001.

SEC. 347. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING FUNDING FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES IN THE THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN.

It is the sense of Congress that the levels of funding for the defense category in this resolution—

(1) assume that members of the Armed Forces are to be authorized to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan; and

(2) provide the $980,000,000 necessary to offset the reduced tax revenue resulting from that participation through fiscal year 2009.

SEC. 348. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING PROTECTING THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that the Congress shall pass legislation which provides for sequestration to reduce Federal spending by the amount necessary to ensure that, in any fiscal year, the Social Security surpluses are used only for the payment of Social Security benefits, retirement security, Social Security reform, or to reduce the Federal debt held by the public.

SEC. 349. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING REGULATION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) Cigarette smoking and tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death and disability in the United States.

(2) Cigarette smoking and tobacco use cause approximately 400,000 deaths each year in the United States.

(3) Health care costs associated with treating tobacco-related diseases are $80,000,000,000 per year, and almost half of such costs are paid for by taxpayer-financed government health care programs.

(4) In spite of the well established dangers of cigarette smoking and tobacco use, there is no Federal agency that has authority to regulate the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of tobacco products.

(5) Major tobacco companies spend over $5,600,000,000 each year ($15,000,000 each day) to promote the use of tobacco products.

(6) Ninety percent of adult smokers first started smoking before the age of 18.

(7) Each day 3,000 children become regular smokers and ⅓ of such children will die of diseases associated with the use of tobacco products.

(8) The Food and Drug Administration regulates the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of nicotine-containing products used as substitutes for cigarette smoking and tobacco use and should be granted the authority to regulate tobacco products.

(9) Congress should restrict youth access to tobacco products and ensure that tobacco products meet minimum safety standards.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the budgetary levels in this resolution assume that—

(1) the Food and Drug Administration is the most qualified Federal agency to regulate tobacco products; and

(2) Congress should enact legislation in the year 2000 that grants the Food and Drug Administration the authority to regulate tobacco products.

SEC. 350. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The demand for after school education is very high, with more than 1,000,000 students waiting to get into such programs.

(2) After school programs improve educational achievement and have widespread support, with over 90 percent of the American people supporting such programs.

(3) 450 of the Nation's leading police chiefs, sheriffs, and prosecutors, along with the presidents of the Fraternal Order of Police, and the International Union of Police Associations, support government funding of after school programs.

(4) Many of our Nation's governors endorse increasing the number of after school programs through a Federal and State partnership.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that this resolution assumes that the President's level of funding for after school programs in fiscal year 2001 will be provided, which will accommodate the current need for after school programs.

SEC. 351. SENSE OF SENATE REGARDING CASH BALANCE PENSION PLAN CONVERSIONS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

(1) Defined benefit pension plans are guaranteed by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and provide a lifetime benefit for a beneficiary and spouse.

(2) Defined benefit pension plans provide meaningful retirement benefits to rank and file workers, since such plans are generally funded by employer contributions.

(3) Employers should be encouraged to establish and maintain defined benefit pension plans.

(4) An increasing number of major employers have been converting their traditional defined benefit plans to ''cash balance'' or other hybrid defined benefit plans.

(5) Under current law, employers are not required to provide plan participants with meaningful disclosure of the impact of converting a traditional defined benefit plan to a ''cash balance'' or other hybrid formula.

(6) For a number of years after a conversion, the cash balance or other hybrid benefit formula may result in a period of ''wear away'' during which older and longer service participants earn no additional benefits.

(7) Federal law should continue to prohibit pension plan participants from being discriminated against on the basis of age in the provision of pension benefits.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the levels in this resolution assume that pension plan participants whose plans are changed to cause older or longer service workers to earn less retirement income, including conversions to ''cash balance plans,'' should receive additional protection than what is currently provided, and Congress should act this year to address this important issue. In particular, at a minimum—

(1) all pension plan participants should receive adequate, accurate, and timely notice of any change to a plan that will cause participants to earn less retirement income in the future; and

(2) pension plans that are changed to a cash balance or other hybrid formula should not be permitted to ''wear away'' participants' benefits in such a manner that older and longer service participants earn no additional pension benefits for a period of time after the change.

SEC. 352. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING UNINSURED AND LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS IN MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the uninsured population in the United States continues to grow at over 100,000 individuals per month, and is estimated to reach over 53,000,000 people by 2007;

(2) the growth in the uninsured population continues despite public and private efforts to increase health insurance coverage;

(3) nearly 80 percent of the uninsured population are members of working families who cannot afford health insurance or cannot access employer-provided health insurance plans;

(4) minority populations, rural residents, and single-parent families represent a disproportionate number of the uninsured population;

(5) the problem of health care access for the uninsured population is compounded in many urban and rural communities by a lack of providers who are available to serve both insured and uninsured populations;

(6) community, migrant, homeless, and public housing health centers have proven uniquely qualified to address the lack of adequate health care services for uninsured populations, serving over 4,500,000 uninsured patients in 1999, including over 1,000,000 new uninsured patients who have sought care from such centers in the last 3 years;

(7) health centers care for nearly 7,000,000 minorities, nearly 600,000 farmworkers, and more than 500,000 homeless individuals each year;

(8) health centers provide cost-effective comprehensive primary and preventive care to uninsured individuals for less than $1.00 per day, or $350 annually, and help to reduce the inappropriate use of costly emergency rooms and inpatient hospital care;

(9) current resources only allow health centers to serve 10 percent of the Nation's 44,000,000 uninsured individuals;

(10) past investments to increase health center access have resulted in better health, an improved quality of life for all Americans, and a reduction in national health care expenditures; and

(11) Congress can act now to increase access to health care services for uninsured and low-income people together with or in advance of health care coverage proposals by expanding the availability of services at community, migrant, homeless, and public housing health centers.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals underlying this resolution on the budget assume that—

(1) appropriations for consolidated health centers under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b) should be increased by 100 percent over the next 5 fiscal years in order to double the number of individuals who receive health care services at community, migrant, homeless, and public housing health centers; and

(2) appropriations for consolidated health centers should be increased by $150,000,000 in fiscal year 2001 over the amount appropriated for such centers in fiscal year 2000.

SEC. 353. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING FISCAL YEAR 2001 FUNDING FOR THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The United States Coast Guard in 1999 saved approximately 3,800 lives in providing the essential service of maritime safety.

(2) The United States Coast Guard in 1999 prevented 111,689 pounds of cocaine and 28,872 pounds of marijuana from entering the United States in providing the essential service of maritime security.

(3) The United States Coast Guard in 1999 boarded more than 14,000 fishing vessels to check for compliance with safety and environmental laws in providing the essential service of the protection of natural resources.

(4) The United States Coast Guard in 1999 ensured the safe passage of nearly 1,000,000 commercial vessel transits through congested harbors with vessel traffic services in providing the essential service of maritime mobility.

(5) The United States Coast Guard in 1999 sent international training teams to help more than 50 countries develop their maritime services in providing the essential service national defense.

(6) Each year, the United States Coast Guard ensures the safe passage of more than 200,000,000 tons of cargo cross the Great Lakes including iron ore, coal, and limestone. Shipping on the Great Lakes faces a unique challenge because the shipping season begins and ends in ice anywhere from 3 to 15 feet thick. The ice-breaking vessel MACKINAW has allowed commerce to continue under these conditions. However, the productive life of the MACKINAW is nearing an end. The Coast Guard has committed to keeping the vessel in service until 2006 when a replacement vessel is projected to be in service, but to meet that deadline, funds must be provided for the Coast Guard in fiscal year 2001 to provide for the procurement of a multipurpose-design heavy icebreaker.

(7) Without adequate funding, the United States Coast Guard would have to radically reduce the level of service it provides to the American public.

(b) ADJUSTMENT IN BUDGET LEVELS.—

(1) INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, the amounts specified in section 103(8) of this resolution for budget authority and outlays for Transportation (budget function 400) for fiscal year 2001 shall be increased as follows:

(A) The amount of budget authority for that fiscal year, by $300,000,000.

(B) The amount of outlays for that fiscal year, by $300,000,000.

(2) OFFSETTING DECREASE IN FUNDING FOR ALLOWANCES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, the amounts specified in section 103(19) of this resolution for budget authority and outlays for Allowances (budget function 920) for fiscal year 2001 shall be decreased as follows:

(A) The amount of budget authority for that fiscal year, by $300,000,000.

(B) The amount of outlays for that fiscal year, by $300,000,000.

(c) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the provisions of this resolution, as modified by subsection (b), should provide additional budget authority and outlay authority for the United States Coast Guard for fiscal year 2001 such that the amount of such authority in fiscal year 2001 exceeds the amount of such authority for fiscal year 2000 by $300,000,000; and

(2) any level of such authority in fiscal year 2001 below the level described in paragraph (1) would require the Coast Guard to—

(A) close numerous stations and utilize remaining assets only for emergency situations;

(B) reduce the number of personnel of an already streamlined workforce;

(C) curtail its capacity to carry out emergency search and rescue; and

(D) reduce operations in a manner that would have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of valuable fish stocks in the North Atlantic and Pacific Northwest and its capacity to stem the flow of illicit drugs and illegal immigration into the United States.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES—H. CON. RES. 290

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the previous order, the Chair appoints on behalf of the Senate the following conferees for the budget resolution: Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BOND, Mr. GORTON, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CONRAD, and Mr. WYDEN.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2000

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 11. I further ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of the proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed to have expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then be in a period for morning business until 12:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each, with the following exceptions: Senator MURKOWSKI or his designee, for 75 minutes, and Senator DASCHLE or his designee, for 75 minutes.

I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from the hours of 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. for the weekly policy conferences.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, for the information of all Senators, the Senate will convene at 10 a.m. and be in a period for morning business until 12:30 p.m. A number of Senators have indicated they would like to speak prior to the cloture vote on the gas tax repeal legislation. Therefore, there will be up to 2½ hours for that debate.

Following the policy luncheons, there will be an additional 10 minutes of debate, to be followed by the vote on invoking cloture on S. 2285, the Federal Fuels Tax Holiday.

I now ask unanimous consent that Senators have until 2:20 p.m. on Tuesday in order to file timely second-degree amendments to S. 2285.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NICKLES. In addition, it was my hope that today we could have reached agreement for the consideration of the marriage tax penalty. That is not possible today; however, I still hope that we will be able to begin consideration of that measure during tomorrow's session. I will continue to work toward that result. If an agreement is not reached on Tuesday, it may be necessary to begin the process to move that bill forward.

I thank all of my colleagues for their cooperation.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3:50 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, April 11, 2000, at 10 a.m.